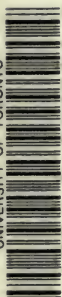


The Poets
and the Poetry
of the Century

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO



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Alfred H. Miles



E. Hilda White
Christmas 1893

The
POETS
and the
POETRY
of the
CENTURY

Christina 1872

The
POETS
and the
POETRY
of the
CENTURY

Robert Bridges
and
Contemporary Poets

Edited by
ALFRED H. MILES

HUTCHINSON & CO.
34, PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON



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PREFATORY.

THIS volume completes the scheme of the "Poets and the Poetry of the Century," from George Crabbe to Rudyard Kipling, a scheme which deals with the lives and works of both the primary and secondary poets of the period, excepting such as have been grouped for treatment in separate volumes as "Humorous" and "Sacred Poets" respectively.

The Editor's frequent acknowledgments of his many obligations to poets, publishers, and critics alike, have left him but little that he can add to his former attempts to do justice to his own sense of appreciation, and to the generosity which calls it forth. From first to last only one publisher has refused requested help, only two poets have declined to be properly represented. For the rest, such acknowledgments as have been possible have been made from time to time in the successive volumes as they have appeared, and it only remains to attempt the duty in so far as the present issue is concerned.

The Editor's thanks are especially due to Mr. Robert Bridges for a free hand in selecting from his poems and plays, as well as for his interesting notice of the life and work of the late Gerard Hopkins and the selection of verse which, accompanying it, finds publicity for the first time in this volume. His thanks are also in a special measure due to Mr. Andrew

Lang, to Mr. Edmund Gosse, Mr. Cosmo Monkhouse, and Dr. Garnett; also to C. Baxter, Esq., of Edinburgh, as representing Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson; Mr. A. P. Watt, of London, as representing Mr. Rudyard Kipling; the Rev. A. W. N. Deacon, as representing the literary interests of the late Arthur O'Shaughnessy; Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, the literary executor of the late Philip Bourke Marston, and Mr. Coulson Kernahan, his friend and critic; also to Mr. J. H. Ingram, as critic and biographer of the late Oliver Madox Brown. For the rest, the Editor can only here generally thank the numerous poets and critics whose work enriches the pages of his volume.

The demands made by such a work as this upon the generosity of publishers are very numerous; and the Editor would be wanting in all title to the generous treatment he has received were he not ready to make the fullest possible acknowledgment of his indebtedness. His thanks are due to Messrs. Kegan Paul & Co. for generous courtesy many times experienced during the progress of this work, and in connection with the present volume for permission to quote from the poems of Mr. Andrew Lang, Mr. Edmund Gosse, Dr. Todhunter, Miss Hickey, Mrs. Bevington-Guggenberger, and the late Miss Constance Naden, published by them: to Messrs. Longmans & Co., the publishers of Mr. Lang's "Grass of Parnassus"; Mr. Robert Louis Stevenson's "A Child's Garden of Verses," "Underwoods," and "Ballads"; Mrs. E. (Nesbit) Bland's "Songs and Legends," "Leaves of Life," and other poems, and Mrs. Graham R. Tomson's "The Bird-Bride; a volume of ballads and sonnets": to Messrs. Mac-

millan & Co., the publishers of Professor Dowden's poems; "The Renewal of Youth," and other poems by Mr. Frederic Myers; "The Judgment of Prometheus," and other poems by Mr. Ernest Myers "Songs in Minor Keys," by Mrs. C. C. Fraser Tytler-Liddell; "Poems, Ballads, and Bucolics," by Rev. H. D. Rawnsley; "The March of Man," by Alfred Hayes: to Messrs. W. H. Allen, the publishers of the several volumes of Mr. John Payne: to Messrs. Chatto & Windus, the publishers of the late Mr. Arthur O'Shaughnessy's poems: to Messrs. Bell & Sons, the publishers of the several volumes of Michael Field's dramas, etc.; also of Mr. Samuel Waddington's "Century of Sonnets": to Mr. Elliot Stock, the publisher of Madame Darmesteter's several volumes of verse; as well as those of Mr. Eugene Lee-Hamilton, the Rev. W. J. Dawson, the late Rev. E. C. Lefroy, and the "Poems, Lyrics, and Sonnets" of Mrs. Guggenberger: to Mr. D. Stott, the publisher of the several volumes of Mr. James Rennell Rodd: to Messrs. W. & J. Arnold, the publishers of Miss Hickey's "Verse Tales": to Messrs. Smith & Elder, the publishers of Miss Hickey's "Michael Villiers, Idealist, and Other Poems": to Messrs. Swan Sonnenschein & Co., the publishers of the several volumes of Mr. George Barlow, and the "Sonnets Round the Coast," of the Rev. H. D. Rawnsley: to Messrs. Blackwood & Sons, the publishers of "The Lost Epic and Other Poems," by William Canton: to Messrs. Thacker, Spink & Co., the publishers of Mr. Rudyard Kipling's "Departmental Ditties"; and Messrs. Methuen, the publishers of his "Barrack-Room Ballads" as well as of Mrs. Graham R. Tomson's "A

Summer Night and Other Poems": to Messrs. Ward & Downey, the publishers of Mr. John Davidson's "In a Music Hall": to Mr. D. Nutt, the publisher of "A Country Muse," first and second series, by Norman Gale: and to Messrs. Elkin Matthews and John Lane, the publishers of "English Poems," by Richard le Gallienne; "A Light Load," by Mrs. Radford; "Silhouettes," by Arthur Symons; and "A Fellowship of Song," by Hayes, Le Gallienne, and Gale.

In closing this long list of acknowledgments, the Editor hopes that he may not have inadvertently omitted any that should have been included, and apologises for any trespass he may have unwittingly made.

At the end of this book a list of the poets to be represented in the remaining volumes of the work is given, together with lists of those treated in this and the seven other volumes which have preceded it. This places the entire scheme of the work in the hands of the reader.

A. H. M.

INDEX.

	PAGE
JOHN TODHUNTER (1839) . . . <i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	1
(<i>Song : To the Wind</i>)	2
(<i>To the Robin</i>)	2
FOREST SONGS AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. A Song of Dawn	3
II. The Black Knight	3
III. A Love Song	3
IV. Lonely Flowers	4
V. Snake-Charms	5
VI. The Modern Gethsemane	5
THE BANSHEE AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. The Banshee	7
II. To Hope	9
SONNETS—	
I. Rain	10
II. A Dream of Egypt	10
HENRY CLARENCE KENDALL (1841—1882)	
<i>J. Howlett-Ross</i>	11
LEAVES FROM AUSTRALIAN FORESTS—	
I. Prefatory Sonnets, I.-II.	17
II. September in Australia	18
III. At Euroma	20
SONGS FROM THE MOUNTAINS—	
I. From Cooranbean	21
II. Orara	24
III. After Many Years	26
GEORGE AUGUSTUS SIMCOX (1841)	
<i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	29
POEMS AND ROMANCES—	
The Soldan's Daughter	31
SONNET—	
A Chill in Summer	36

	PAGE
JOHN PAYNE (1842) <i>Richard Garnett</i>	37
SONGS OF LIFE AND DEATH—	
I. Sir Erwin's Questing	39
II. The Ballad of May Margaret	44
III. A Song Before the Gates of Death	47
IV. Vocation Song	49
V. A Soul's Antiphon	51
VI. A Song of Willow	55
NEW POEMS—	
I. A Birthday Song	57
II. Love's Autumn	58
FREDERIC W. H. MYERS (1843)	
<i>J. Addington Symonds</i>	61
THE RENEWAL OF YOUTH AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. The Implicit Promise of Immortality	67
II. Teneriffe	73
III. A Letter from Newport	75
IV. Honour	78
V. Unsatisfactory	79
EDWARD DOWDEN (1843) . <i>James Ashcroft Noble</i>	81
POEMS—	
I. Andromeda: The Heroines	85
II. The Corn-Crake	89
III. A Child's Noonday Sleep	91
IV. In the Cathedral Close	92
V. Burdens	93
VI. Oasis	94
VII. Renunciants	94
VIII. Watershed	95
SONNETS—	
I. A Disciple	96
II. Seeking God	96
III. Emmausward	97
IV. Deliverance	97
V. The Singer	98
VI. Leonardo's "Monna Lisa"	98
ERNEST MYERS (1844) <i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	99
THE JUDGMENT OF PROMETHEUS	101
GORDON	109
SONNETS—	
I. Milton	112
II. Achilles	112

	PAGE
ROBERT BRIDGES (1844) . . . <i>Herbert Warren</i>	113
SHORTER POEMS—	
I. "Will Love again Awake?"	123
II. Wooing	124
III. "There is a Hill"	126
IV. "I have loved Flowers that Fade"	128
V. On a Dead Child	129
VI. "I praise the Tender Flower"	131
VII. "Awake, my Heart"	131
VIII. "I love my Lady's Eyes"	132
IX. "O Youth whose Hope is High"	133
X. "I love all Beauteous Things"	133
XI. "Wanton with Long Delay"	134
XII. "My Eyes for Beauty pine"	134
EROS AND PSYCHE—	
Measure VII.	135
THE GROWTH OF LOVE—	
Sonnets vii.—viii.	139
Sonnets xxxvi. and xxxviii.	140
PALICIO (Act II., Scene 5, a Selection)	141
THE CHRISTIAN CAPTIVES (Act 5, a Selection)	148
ACHILLES IN SCYROS—	
1. Deidamia and Achilles	155
II. Chorus: "The Earth loveth the Spring"	158
GERARD HOPKINS (1844—1889) <i>Robert Bridges</i>	161
POEMS—	
I. A Vision of Mermaids (selected lines)	165
II. The Habit of Perfection	166
III. The Starlight Night	167
IV. Spring	168
V. The Candle Indoors	168
VI. Spring and Fall	169
VII. Inversnaid	169
VIII. To —	170
ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY (1844—1881) <i>Richard Garnett</i>	171
THE EPIC OF WOMEN AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. Three Flowers of Modern Greece (I. Ianoula)	173
II. Bislavaret	174
III. Palm Flowers	180
IV. The Fountain of Tears	184
V. Barcarolle	187

	PAGE
MUSIC AND MOONLIGHT—	
I. I made Another Garden	189
II. Has Summer come without the Rose?	190
SONGS OF A WORKER—	
I. Keeping a Heart	191
II. A Love Symphony	192
ANDREW LANG (1844) <i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	193
(<i>Sonnet: Grass of Parnassus</i>)	194
(<i>Ballade of his Choice of a Sepulchre</i>)	196
ALMÆ MATRES	197
BALLADES—	
I. Ballade of Blue China	199
II. Ballade of Cricket	200
III. Ballade of the Southern Cross	201
IV. Ballade to Theocritus in Winter	202
GRASS OF PARNASSUS—	
I. Twilight on Tweed	203
II. Nightingale Weather	204
III. Good-Bye	205
IV. A Dream	206
V. They Hear the Syrens for the Second Time	206
VI. Meleager—	
(1) Heliodore	207
(2) Heliodore Dead	208
SONNETS—	
I. Homer	209
II. Homeric Unity	209
III. The Odyssey	210
IV. Colonel Burnaby	210
SAMUEL WADDINGTON (1844)	
<i>Richard le Gallienne</i>	211
(<i>Sonnet: Beata Beatrix</i>)	213
LYRICS AND SONNETS—	
I. "Is there Light upon the Uplands?"	215
II. Mors et Vita	216
III. On the Heights	217
IV. The Inn of Care	219
V. Nature	220
VI. From Night to Night	220
VII. Soul and Body	221
VIII. Night-fall	221
IX. "Through the Night Watches"	222
X. Self-Sacrifice	222

	PAGE
EUGENE LEE-HAMILTON (1845)	
<i>John Addington Symonds</i>	223
(<i>Sonnet : To the Muse</i>)	223
(<i>Sonnet : Louis de Ligny to Leonora</i>	
<i>Altamura</i>)	226
POEMS AND SONNETS—	
I. Ipsissimus	229
II. A Letter to A. Mary F. Robinson	233
III. Sea-Shell Murmurs	236
IV. Sunken Gold	237
V. Pia Dei Tolomei to Love and Death	237
VI. Luca Signorelli to his Son	238
VII. The Last Doge to Fettered Venice	238
EMILY H. HICKEY (1845) <i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	239
(<i>Love Song : "I know not whether"</i>)	240
(<i>Sonnet : "For Richer, for Poorer"</i>)	240
(<i>Michael Villiers, Idealist : Selections</i>)	241
LYRICS AND VERSE TALES—	
I. Beloved, it is Morn	245
II. "Thank You"	246
III. "M." to "N."	247
IV. Her Dream	248
V. A Sea Story	250
WILLIAM CANTON (1845) <i>James Ashcroft Noble</i>	251
(<i>Sonnet : But when my child</i>)	253
(<i>Woodland Windows</i>)	254
POEMS—	
I. The Crow	255
II. A Deserted Garden	255
III. Day-Dreams	256
IV. Love and Labour	257
V. Any Father	258
VI. Any Mother	258
VII. A Philosopher	258
VIII. Suspirium	259
IX. Birth and Death	260
LOUISA S. GUGGENBERGER (1845)	
<i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	261
(<i>Summer Song</i>)	263
(<i>Sonnet : Love's Depth</i>)	264

	PAGE
KEY NOTES—	
I. Morning	265
II. Afternoon	266
III. Twilight	267
IV. Midnight	268
V. Unfulfilled	269
POEMS, LYRICS, AND SONNETS—	
I. Bees in Clover	270
II. The Valley of Remorse	272
III. At Sabbath Dawn	277
IV. Am I to Lose You?	278
GEORGE BARLOW (1847)	<i>Alfred H. Miles</i> 279
THE PAGEANT OF LIFE—	
I. Blue-Bells	281
II. Two Nights	281
III. The Old Maid	282
IV. Retrospect	283
V. The Dead Child	284
VI. The Blind Poet	284
VII. The Poet	286
FROM DAWN TO SUNSET—	
I. "If only Thou art True"	288
II. Thee First, Thee Last	288
III. Death	290
SONNETS—	
I. The Poet's Mission	292
II. The Final Loneliness	292
C. C. FRASER TYTLER-LIDDELL (1848)	<i>Alfred H. Miles</i> 293
SONGS IN MINOR KEYS—	
I. Absolution	295
II. The Highland Glens	300
III. Thou too Hast Suffered	303
IV. Jesus the Carpenter	304
V. Good-Night	305
VI. Sonnet: A Day in June	306
EDMUND GOSSE (1849)	<i>Alfred H. Miles</i> 307
(Lyric: "Autumn Closes")	310
ON VIOL AND FLUTE—	
Lying in the Grass	311

INDEX.

XV

	PAGE
NEW POEMS—	
I. The Gifts of the Muses	314
II. The Farm	324
III. To My Daughter Teresa	326
FIRDAUSI IN EXILE AND OTHER POEMS—	
The Cruise of the <i>Rover</i>	328
WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY (1849)	
<i>James Ashcroft Noble</i>	335
PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON (1850—1887)	
<i>Coulson Kernahan</i>	343
SONG-TIDE—	
The Rose and the Wind	349
ALL IN ALL—	
In the November Night	351
WIND VOICES—	
I. Pure Souls	353
II. At Parting	354
III. The Old Churchyard of Bonchurch	355
IV. The Two Burdens	357
V. Before and After Flowering	358
A LAST HARVEST—	
I. Go, Songs of Mine	362
II. Love's Lost Pleasure-House	363
III. Flower Fairies	363
SONNETS—	
I. Not Thou but I	365
II. No Death	365
III. The Breadth and Beauty of the Spacious Night	366
IV. Love Asleep	366
HARDWICK DRUMMOND RAWNSLEY (1850)	
<i>James Ashcroft Noble</i>	367
(<i>Moon-thirst</i>)	368
(<i>Service in the Old Parish Church, Whitby</i>)	369
SONNETS ROUND THE COAST—	
I. Plymouth Harbour—Sunday	371
II. Cleveland	371
III. After the Herrings, Whitby	372
IV. The Jet Workers	372
POEMS, BALLADS, AND BUCOLICS—	
I. Daniel Periton	373
II. In a Garden	376

	PAGE
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON (1850)	
<i>Cosmo Monkhouse</i>	377
(<i>Underwoods</i> , xxxviii.)	378
A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES—	
I. Bed in Summer	383
II. The Sun's Travels	383
III. The Land of Counterpane	384
IV. Foreign Lands	384
V. My Shadow	385
UNDERWOODS—	
I. Envoy	386
II. A Song of the Road	386
III. It is the Season now to Go	387
IV. The House Beautiful	388
V. To a Gardener	389
VI. Requiem	390
VII. The Sick Child	390
VIII. A Mile an' a Bittock	391
IX. It's an Owercome Sooth	392
BALLADS—	
Christmas at Sea	393
MICHAEL FIELD <i>Lionel Johnson</i>	395
CALLIRHOË—	
Machaon and the Faun (Act III., Scene 6)	403
CANUTE THE GREAT—	
Canute and Gunhild (Act I., Scene 4)	411
THE TRAGIC MARY—	
Bothwell's Soliloquy	415
LYRICS—	
I. A Summer Wind	417
II. Beloved	417
III. Yea, Gold is Son of Zeus	418
ALICE MEYNELL <i>James Ashcroft Noble</i>	419
PRELUDES—	
I. San Lorenzo Giustiniani's Mother	423
II. Builders of Ruins	424
III. In Early Spring	426
IV. Parted	427
V. To the Beloved Dead	428
VI. A Letter from a Girl to Her Own Old Age	429
VII. An Unmarked Festival	431
VIII. Song: "As the Inhastening Tide"	432

	PAGE
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS—	
I. The Modern Poet	433
II. My Heart shall be Thy Garden	434
III. Renouncement	434
ERIC MACKAY (1851) <i>Alex. H. Japp</i>	435
POEMS—	
I. To-morrow (Love Letters of a Violinist, IX.)	439
II. The Waking of the Lark	443
III. Mirage	445
IV. Beethoven at the Piano	447
V. Mary Arden	449
VI. A Ballad of Kisses	453
VII. The Little Grave	454
VIII. A Dirge	454
HERBERT E. CLARKE (1852) <i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	455
SONGS OF EXILE—	
I. A Spring Chorus	457
II. On the Embankment	460
III. In the Wood	462
IV. On the Pier	463
V. Age	464
STORM-DRIFT	
I. A Nocturn at Twilight	465
II. A Voluntary	466
III. Failure	467
IV. A Cry	469
SONNETS—	
I.-II. Life and Death	471
III. A Chord	472
IV. The Past Dethroned	472
WILLIAM J. DAWSON (1854) <i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	473
A VISION OF SOULS AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. The Coming of the Soul	475
II. Flower Faces	477
III. The First-Born	478
IV. Deliverance	478
V. The Sleeping Mother	479
VI. The Last Day	480
VII. A Child's Portrait	481
VIII. To a Little Child	481

	PAGE
EDWARD CRACROFT LEFROY (1855—1891)	
<i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	483
(<i>A Thought from Pindar</i>)	484
SONNETS—	
I. On the Beach in November	485
II. In February	485
III. Two Thoughts	486
IV. On Reading a Poet's "Life"	486
V. The Art that Endures	487
VI. Childhood and Youth	487
VII. A Football-Player	488
VIII. A Cricket-Bowler	488
OLIVER MADOX BROWN (1855—1874)	
<i>J. H. Ingram</i>	489
(<i>Sonnet: "Made Indistinguishable 'mid the Boughs"</i>)	490
(<i>Lyric: Before and After</i>)	492
(<i>Stanzas: "Oh Delirious Sweetness"</i>)	493
POEMS—	
I. To All Eternity	495
II. Gipsy Song	497
III. Laura's Song	498
IV. Sonnet: "No More these Passion-Worn Faces"	498
WILLIAM SHARP (1856)	<i>James Ashcroft Noble</i> 499
(<i>The Song of Flowers</i>)	500
(<i>Sonnet: Spring Wind</i>)	502
MOTHERHOOD—	
Part I.	503
ROMANTIC BALLADS AND POEMS OF PHANTASY—	
Mad Madge o' Cree	506
OSCAR WILDE (1856)	<i>Alfred H. Miles</i> 509
POEMS—	
I. Ave Imperatrix	513
II. Apologia	517
III. Requiescat	518
IV. On the Sale of Keats' Love Letters	519
V. Libertatis Sacra Fames	519
VI. To Milton	520
VII. Helas!	520

	PAGE
A. MARY F. ROBINSON-DARMESTETER (1857)	
<i>Arthur Symons</i>	521
A HANDFUL OF HONEYSUCKLE—	
I. A Pastoral	527
II. Dawn-Angels	527
III. Paradise Fancies (I.-IV.)	528
IV. Sonnet: "God Sent a Poet to Reform His Earth"	530
A CROWNED HIPPOLYTUS—	
I. Two Lovers	531
II. A Jonquil	532
THE NEW ARCADIA—	
Tuscan Olives	533
AN ITALIAN GARDEN—	
I. Florentine May	535
II. Venetian Nocturne	536
III. Tuscan Cypress	537
SONGS, BALLADS, AND A PLAY—	
I. Etruscan Tombs	542
II. Tuberoses	544
III. An Orchard at Avignon	545
LYRICS—	
I. The Dead Friend	547
II. Twilight	547
JOHN DAVIDSON (1857)	<i>Alfred H. Miles</i> 549
BRUCE: A DRAMA—	
Act III. (A Selection)	551
IN A MUSIC-HALL AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. For Lovers	557
II. No Man's Land	559
ALFRED HAYES (1857)	<i>James Ashcroft Noble</i> 563
THE MARCH OF MAN AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. The March of Man (Selected Passages)	565
II. To Sweet Seventeen	568
A FELLOWSHIP OF SONG—	
I. Conservation	569
II. The Silent Harp	570

	PAGE
CONSTANCE C. W. NADEN (1858—1889)	
<i>Richard Garnett</i>	571
POEMS—	
I. The Pantheist's Song of Immortality	573
II. The Confession	574
III. Friendship	577
IV. Natural Selection	578
EDITH (NESBIT) BLAND (1858)	<i>Alex. H. Japp</i> 579
LAYS AND LEGENDS—	
I. Song: Oh, Baby, Baby, Baby Dear	581
II. The Depths of the Sea	582
LEAVES OF LIFE—	
I. Winter Violets	583
II. Among His Books	584
III. Morning Song	585
MISCELLANEOUS POEMS—	
I. Ballad of a Bridal	587
II. A Tragedy	589
III. A Tragedy	590
IV. The Ghost	591
SONNETS—	
I.-II. Night and Morning	592
WILLIAM WATSON (1858)	<i>James Ashcroft Noble</i> 593
RENNELL RODD (1858)	<i>Alfred H. Miles</i> 599
(<i>Good-Bye</i>)	600
SONGS OF THE SOUTH—	
At Tiber Mouth	601
THE UNKNOWN MADONNA AND OTHER POEMS—	
The Unknown Madonna	605
THE VIOLET CROWN AND SONGS OF ENGLAND—	
Spring Thoughts	607
MRS. ERNEST RADFORD (1858)	<i>Arthur Symons</i> 609
(<i>"When You are Lonely"</i>)	610
(<i>Evening</i>)	611
(<i>Song: "Ah, Bring it not so Grudgingly"</i>)	612
A LIGHT LOAD—	
I. Spring Song	613
II. Song: "Amid a Crown of Radiant Hills"	613
III. "Night"	614
IV. Orpheus	615
V. By the Sea	616

	PAGE
GRAHAM R. TOMSON (1860)	
<i>Richard le Gallienne</i>	617
THE BIRD-BRIDE ; BALLADS AND SONNETS—	
I. Ballad of the Bird-Bride	619
II. The Smile of All-Wisdom	622
SONNETS—	
I. An Interlude	623
II. Omar Khayyám	623
III. Blind Man's Holiday	624
IV. Hereafter	624
A SUMMER NIGHT AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. A Summer Night	625
II. Two Songs	626
III. In the Rain	627
IV. Chimæra	628
NORMAN GALE (1862) <i>James Ashcroft Noble</i>	629
(<i>Apology</i>)	630
A COUNTRY MUSE—	
I. A Song : " I will not Say "	633
II. Labore Confecto	633
III. Spring	635
IV. A Pastoral	635
V. The Invitation	636
VI. The Shaded Pool	638
RICHARD LE GALLIENNE (1865)	
<i>James Ashcroft Noble</i>	641
(<i>Confessio Amantis</i>)	643
(<i>Sunset in the City</i>)	644
MY LADIES' SONNETS—	
I. To My Mother	645
II. "Quelle Heure Est-Il ?"	645
ENGLISH POEMS—	
I. To My Wife, Mildred	647
II. With Some Old Love Verses	648
III. The Wonder-Child	648
IV. Ad Cimmerios	649
V. What of the Darkness?	649
VI. Juliet and Her Roméo	650
VII. Matthew Arnold	650

	PAGE
RUDYARD KIPLING (1865) <i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	651
DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES—	
I. The Story of Uriah	655
II. The Galley-Slave	656
BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS AND OTHER POEMS—	
I. Tommy	659
II. "Fuzzy-Wuzzy"	661
III. The Conundrum of the Workshops	663
IV. Ballad of East and West	665
AC ETIAM <i>Alfred H. Miles</i>	671
JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE (1844)	672
WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK (1850)	676
HENRY BELLYSE BAILDON (1849)	678
H. T. MACKENZIE BELL (1856)	681
HORACE G. GROSER (1863)	682
ARTHUR SYMONS (1865)	683
WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS (1866)	685
CLEMENT WILLIAM SCOTT (1841)	690
ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES (1846)	690
GEORGE ROBERT SIMS (1847)	691
FREDERIC EDWARD WEATHERLY (1848)	691
FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE (1849)	692
F. WILLIAM ORDE WARD (1843)	692
ARTHUR JOSEPH MUNBY (1828)	693
PHILIP STANHOPE WORSLEY (1831—1866)	695
GEORGE FRANCIS (SAVAGE) ARMSTRONG (1845)	696
EDMUND G. A. HOLMES (1850)	697
THEOPHILUS JULIUS HENRY MARZIALS (1850)	697
HENRY CHARLES BEECHING	699
ALBERT EUBULE-EVANS	700
LADY CHARLOTTE ELLIOT	700
JOHN ARTHUR GOODCHILD	701
F. WYVILLE HOME (1851)	702
DOUGLAS BROOK WHEELTON SLADEN (1856)	704
ROBERT, LORD HOUGHTON (1858)	705
CHARLES GEORGE DOUGLAS ROBERTS (1860)	706
JAMES DRYDEN HOSKEN	711
HENRY JOHN PATMORE (1860)	712
AMY LEVY	713
SARSON C. J. INGRAM	713
ELIZABETH RACHEL CHAPMAN	713
KATHARINE TYNAN	713
MAY PROBYN	713
JANE BARLOW	713
FRANCES WYNNE	714

Robert Bridges
and
Contemporary Poets



John Todhunter.

1839.

MR. JOHN TODHUNTER was born in Dublin on the 30th of December, 1839. He was educated at Trinity College, Dublin, where he studied medicine as well as at Paris and Vienna, graduating as M.D. in 1866. He was Professor of English Literature at Alexandra College, Dublin, from 1870 to 1874.

His published works include "The Theory of the Beautiful," a Saturday lecture delivered in Trinity College, Dublin (1872), "Laurella and Other Poems" (1876), "Alcestis" (drama, 1878), "A Study of Shelley" (1880), "Forest Songs" (1881), "The True Tragedy of Rienzi" (drama, 1881), "Helena in Troas" (drama, 1886), "The Banshee and Other Poems" (1888), "A Sicilian Idyll" (drama, 1890), "The Poison Flower" (drama, 1891).

As will be seen by this list, Mr. Todhunter has written much in both lyric and dramatic form. Of his lyric work "Forest Songs" (1881) and "The Banshee and Other Poems" (1888) afford us excellent examples, and show us the poet as a singer who can impart strength even to trifles, and who can wield force with precision and delicacy. The "Forest Songs" are well named, and recall the forest with many of its characteristics and associations, and no little of its atmosphere. Of these the unrhymed lyrics are sufficiently numerous to consti-

tute a characteristic feature of the poet's work, and it is not too much to say that they are eminently successful. Of rhymed lyrics there are many which unite strength and grace, little snatches of song that sing to us at every turn as we pass up and down the volume. The following song to the wind is one of these :—

“Bring from the craggy haunts of birch and pine,
 Thou wild wind, bring
 Keen forest odours from that realm of thine,
 Upon thy wing !

“O wind, O mighty, melancholy wind,
 Blow through me, blow !
 Thou blowest forgotten things into my mind,
 From long ago.”

The following lyric, “To the Robin,” from the later volume may also be quoted here :—

“Art thou there, thou dauntless singer,
 Robin, art thou there ?
 Though the Autumn with his wind-flaws
 Makes the branches bare.

“Dauntless there shall Winter find thee,
 Even as now thou art,
 Pouring songs in such a rapture
 From as great a heart.”

With the dramas, the last three of which have been produced upon the stage, it is not possible for us to deal at any length. “*Helena in Troas*” contains many fine passages ; but quotation, within possible limits, would be mutilation, and it must be read as a whole to be appreciated. Mr. Todhunter's complete command of himself, as well as of the vehicle of verse, enables him, whether in rhymed or blank verse, to rise with his theme as occasion may require. In “*Helena in Troas*” he shows equal mastery of the voluptuously passionate and the classically severe.

ALFRED H. MILES.

FOREST SONGS AND OTHER POEMS.

1881.

JOHN TODDHUNTER.

I.—A SONG OF DAWN.

I CALLED grey Night to speak my doom,
Wandering in tears,
Peopling the wilderness of gloom
With shadowy fears.

I met glad Morn upon the hills
Walking in light,
And all that cloud of threatening ills
Fled at her sight.

II.—THE BLACK KNIGHT.

A BEATEN and a baffled man,
My life drags lamely day by day,
Too young to die, too old to plan,
In failure grey.

The knights ride east, the knights ride west,
For ladies' tokens blithe of cheer,
Each bound upon some gallant quest ;
While I rust here.

III.—A LOVE SONG.

A S drooping fern for dewdrops,
For flowers the bee,
Wave-weary birds for woodlands,
Long I for thee.

As rivers seek the ocean,
Tired things their nest,
As storm-worn ships their haven
Seek I thy breast.

IV.—LONELY FLOWERS.

LONELY in the light of morning,
In the Forest's gladed stillness,
Exiled from the flowery meadows,
Trembling stand three delicate hairbells.

Pale, forsaken of your kindred,
Wherefore, like estrays of azure
Lured by forest-pools from heaven,
Lurk ye here, ye tremulous hairbells ?

In the footsteps of the morning,
Lonely wandering in the wildwood,
I alone have seen the vision
Of your solitary beauty ;

And I know not why ye haunt me
Like familiar things, yet strangely,
With dim, ghostlike sense of strangeness,
Mystify this shadowy woodland.

In the footsteps of the morning,
Through forgotten fields of dreamland
Wandering, have my lonely footsteps
Stirred, long since, this virgin stillness ?

Do these dew-dimmed branches know me ?
Or these crags and shadowy places ?
What embalmed enchantment breathe I,
That enraptures and affrights me ?

Witchlike, sphynxlike, dumb for ever,
Hang their heads, those desolate harebells ;
Some mysterious past concealing,
Some mysterious fate foreboding.

V.—SNAKE-CHARM.

INTO this dusky bower
 Of sylvan quiet,
 Where roses and rank vines
 Only run riot,
 Whence comest thou, dark Shape, at this sweet hour,
 Into this lonely bower ?

“ I am the spectral form
 Of hopes forgotten,
 Birth-strangled babes of joy
 Left to grow rotten,
 Corpses of unborn deeds, devoured still warm
 By sloth’s corrupting swarm.”

Welcome, thou dismal guest,
 Sit down beside me,
 Lie by me all night long,
 Sting me and chide me.
 At dawn I’ll gather fruits to lull thy rest,
 Thou serpent of the breast !

VI.—THE MODERN GETHSEMANE.

NO, I’m no god, alas ! Christ or Prometheus —
 What boots my anguish ? The blood of my
 passion
 Works no redemption. Ah ! wearied with sorrow,
 Pale and reproachful, ye poor and opprest ones,
 With sullen eyes will ye wither my roses,
 Passing me moaning ?

Call you these roses ? Nay, here be great blood-drops
Blown into flowers—see ! If this be a garden,
Name it Gethsemane. Still, ye opprest ones,
With weary eyes will ye pass by my roses ?

Is it my fault that my blood brings no healing ?
Think ye my anguish the less, being little,
Dull, unheroic ; my mountain of passion
This poor, small garden ? What look ye to me for ?

Come ye for grapes filled with wine of redemption,
Holy, newbirthful, the blood eucharistic
Of a great Lamb slain ? Nay, I'm but a small one—
Sad as your eyes as ye pass by my roses.

Yet, even for me, 'mid the clouds of some dawning,
Pale, like the ghost of Life's babe, tranquil, terrible,
I may see standing the angel of agony,
With new, strange chalice—shall I not drink it ?

Ah ! what avails it ? The blood of my passion,
What can it purchase ? When, six long hours hanging,
Loud, with rent heart, I would cry, " It is finished ! "
Were the world saved ? I, alas ! am no Saviour.

I would hang twelve, though, for my little world's sake,
I would hang twelve, would my Father in Heaven
Heal but Love's wound, and I felt through the death-
swoon

There at my cross-foot the Magdalen standing,
Kissing the blood from my feet, loving, weeping,
Beautiful, with long hair.

THE BANSHEE AND OTHER POEMS.

1888.

JOHN TODHUNTER.

I.—THE BANSHEE.

GREEN, in the wizard arms
Of the foam-bearded Atlantic,
An isle of old enchantment,
A melancholy isle,
Enchanted and dreaming lies :
And there, by Shannon's flowing,
In the moonlight, spectre-thin,
The spectre Erin sits.

An aged desolation,
She sits by old Shannon's flowing,
A mother of many children,
Of children exiled and dead,
In her home, with bent head, homeless,
Clasping her knees she sits,
Keening, keening !

And at her keene the fairy-grass
Trembles on dun and barrow ;
Around the foot of her ancient crosses
The grave-grass shakes and the nettle swings ;
In haunted glens the meadow-sweet
Flings to the night wind
Her mystic mournful perfume ;
The sad spearmint by holy wells
Breathes melancholy balm.

Sometimes she lifts her head,
With blue eyes tearless,
And gazes athwart the reek of night
Upon things long past,
Upon things to come.

And sometimes, when the moon
Brings tempest upon the deep,
And roused Atlantic thunders from his caverns in
the west,
The wolfhound at her feet
Springs up with a mighty bay,
And chords of mystery sound from the wild harp at
her side,
Strung from the heart of poets ;
And she flies on the wings of tempest
Around her shuddering isle,
With grey hair streaming :
A meteor of evil omen,
The spectre of hope forlorn,
Keening, keening !

She keenes, and the strings of her wild harp shiver
On the gusts of night :
O'er the four waters she keenes—over Moyle she
keenes,
O'er the Sea of Milith, and the Strait of Strongbow,
And the Ocean of Columbus.

And the Fianna hear, and the ghost of her cloudy
hovering heroes ;
And the swan, Fianoula, wails o'er the waters of
Inisfail,
Chanting her song of destiny,
The rune of the weaving Fates.

And the nations hear in the void and quaking time
of night,
Sad unto dawning, dirges,
Solemn dirges,
And snatches of bardic song ;
Their souls quake in the void and quaking time of night,
And they dream of the weird of kings,
And tyrannies moulting, sick
In the dreadful wind of change.

Wail no more, lonely one, mother of exiles wail no
more,
Banshee of the world—no more !
Thy sorrows are the world's, thou art no more alone ;
Thy wrongs, the world's.

II.—TO HOPE.

O GENTLE Hope, whose shy sweet eyes
Are dearer than the soft blue skies
Of Spring to the o'erwintered earth,
Or to the woods forlorn the first dim violet's birth !
Where shall I find thee ?
Wilt thou for ever, in thy wistful flight
After to-morrow's light,
Leave me behind thee ?
Turn, and from yon far dawnlit shore
Come pacing through the wild uproar
Of the stern sea of wildering waves,
Where trade our mortal barks o'er their unresting
graves :
Walk thou their terror !
The vexèd surge, within whose briny pits
The floating sea-fowl sits,
Shall smile, thy mirror.

SONNETS.

JOHN TODHUNTER.

I.—RAIN.

THE kindled clouds loom bright as burning smoke
O'er the vast conflagration of the sky,
Rain in their folds, and inland heavily
Roll o'er the sodden fallows, all a-soak
Under the glowing sunset. Since I woke,
Till now with skirts updrawn sullenly fly
The hosts of gloom, has rain, rain rushing by
Battered the woodlands with his watery stroke.
In baffled rage, tempestuous melancholy,
Throbs my oppress'd heart, as of one afar
From some last field of death and victory ;
Who waits to hear his comrades' onset-volley,
Swordless and sick. What means this ghostly war ?
What cause, what cloudy banner summons me ?

II.—A DREAM OF EGYPT.

“ Where's my Serpent of old Nile ? ”

NIGHT sends forth many an eagle-wingèd dream
To soar through regions never known by day ;
And I by one of these was rapt away,
To where the sun-burnt Nile with opulent stream
Makes teem the desert sand. My pomp supreme
Enriched the noon ; I spurned earth's common clay ;
For I was Antony, and by me lay
That Snake whose sting was bliss. Nations did seem
But camels for the burden of our joy ;
Kings were our slaves ; our wishes glowed in the air
And grew fruition ; night grew day, day night,
Lest the high bacchanal of our loves should cloy ;
We reined the tiger, Life, with flower-crowned hair,
Abashlessly abandoned to delight.

Henry Clarence Kendall.

1841—1882.

AUSTRALIAN by birth and inspiration, Henry Clarence Kendall holds the foremost place among the poets of his native land. No other Australian has approached him in his mastery of rhythm, the copiousness of his diction, and the startling faithfulness of his descriptions of the characteristics of Australian scenery. His power of reproducing the very atmosphere of the Australian wilds is seen in his "Death in the Bush" and the "Glen of Arrawatta"—two poems written in competition for a prize offered for the best poem produced in the colonies. "Orion" Horne acted as adjudicator, and in awarding the palm to these two poems, added a finely generous accolade to his judgment. These poems are perhaps the only ones to which the poet has imparted a dramatic interest, his genius being essentially lyrical. It has been said by a discerning critic that there are few poems in the English language in which a sorrowful story is told with more poetical beauty and simplicity, and greater harmony of scenic effect and dramatic incident. These poems are so essentially Australian they could have been written nowhere but in Australia, and by no hand but Kendall's. They are charged with the stifling heat of the wild forest; they depict the mysterious half-known regions where

nature is waterless and whelmed in silent heat ; where the trail of the cruel starving black is the only record of human life ; where gaunt and fire-bitten trees are the monitors of desolation ; where the pathless bush terrifies the daring explorer with spectral fears, and unmans him by the very impressiveness of its dumbness. Reading such poems as these, the bush, with all its vague terrors, grows up strongly, clearly, phantom-like before us, and we realise the fears, the struggles, and the horrors of those who have confronted the "fiery drouth and burning sameness of the forest" :—

" And, therefore, through the fiercer summer months,
While all the swamps were rotten, while the flats
Were baked and broken ; where the clayey rifts
Yawned wide, half-choked with drifted herbage past,
Spontaneous flames would burst from thence and race
Across the prairies all day long.

At night

The winds were up, and then with fourfold speed
A harsh gigantic growth of smoke and fire
Would roar along the bottoms in the wake
Of fainting flocks of parrots, wallaroos,
And 'wildered wild things, scattering right and left
For safety, vague throughout the general gloom."

Throughout Kendall's poems are to be found many illustrations of his remarkable power of making his words echo the sense of his descriptions. Take as an illustration the first stanza of "Fainting by the Way," a Psalm of Life, which unfortunately does not appear in the poet's collected works :—

" Swarthy wastelands, wide and woodless, glittering miles
and miles away,
Where the south wind seldom wanders, and the winters
will not stay,

Lurid wastelands, pent in silence, thick with hot and
thirsty sighs,
Where the scanty thorn leaves twinkle with their
haggard, hopeless eyes;
Furnaced wastelands, hunched with hillocks like to stony
billows rolled,
Where the naked flats lie swirling, like a sea of darkened
gold;
Burning wastelands, glancing upward with a weird and
vacant stare,
Where the languid heavens quiver on red depths of
stirless air."

A faithful photograph of an Australian scene. His poems abound in felicitous phrases full of local colour, and revealing national characteristics, such as "the breathless brazen sky," "runnels babbling of a plenteous fall," "the crimson days and dull dead nights of thirst," "a sultry summer rimmed with thunder-clouds and red with forest fires"; or, as in "Dungog," a poem hidden in a back number of the *Sydney Morning Herald*:—

" There, through the fretful autumn days
 Beneath a cloudy sun,
Comes, rolling down rain-rutted ways,
 The wind, Euroclydon,
While rattles over riven rocks
 The thunder harsh and dry;
And blustering gum and brooding box
 Are threshing at the sky!"

Henry Clarence Kendall was born on the 18th of April, 1841, at Armstrong's Forest, about eight miles from the little harbour of Ulladulla. His father, Basil Kendall, was a man of considerable natural ability and exalted thought, but of a weak, aimless character that left its baleful stamp upon the life and aspirations of his son, to whom, however, he

was deeply attached, and with whom he spent many hours of instructive companionship. But the boy lost his father ere he was twelve years of age. Some few years passed over his head in unguided growth, when his uncle—a whaling captain—took him for a cruise amongst the South Sea Islands, in his vessel, the *Waterwitch*. Of this cruise in after years he wrote: "A man leaving a bustling, noisy, crowded centre of civilisation, and sailing to the South Sea Islands, is not always prepared for the novel world he is introduced to. After weeks of association with a large, primitive wilderness of sea, he finds himself amongst paradises, where the features of nature remain as they were in the morning of the world." In the course of this cruise the whaler visited the island of Tanna in the New Hebrides, and the poet describes the island as being the most beautiful of the South Sea Islands. A battle took place between two rival factions of the island, and the youthful poet recorded in verse, under the title of the "Ballad of Tanna," the feelings with which the event inspired him. After cruising about for two years he returned to Sydney, and was entered in the office of James Lionel Michael, a literary solicitor, who exercised a powerful influence for good upon the shy and solitary boy. He did not remain long a student of the statutes. Sir John Robertson obtained for him a position in the Survey Department of New South Wales, and Sir Henry Parkes promoted him to the Colonial Secretary's office. When Kendall was twenty years of age, he published a small volume, entitled "Poems and Songs," a copy of which crossed the seas, and received a kindly welcome from

the *Athenæum*. In an encouraging notice from the pen of Gerald Massey, the young poet was declared to have "received from Nature some of that strong poetic faculty and power which no amount of learning can bestow," while the peculiar mark of his genius was described as "a wild, dark, Müller-like power of landscape painting." This favourable notice, while it encouraged the poet, did not materially assist the sale of his little volume.

Six years after the publication of his first volume Kendall wedded Charlotte, the daughter of Dr. Rutter, of Sydney. She proved a loving comforter to the wayward genius, and a helpmeet for the troubled soul. He had now become dissatisfied with official life, and having won the poetical prize, to which I have already referred, he decided to leave Sydney, and seek a wider field in the more enterprising southern capital. The step was an unfortunate one, and sad stories are told of the "dark time" through which he passed in the gay, money-making metropolis of Melbourne.

In 1869, he published his "Leaves from Australian Forests." It was very favourably reviewed by the Australian press, but had no sale. The failure of his volume, his inability to settle to the hack work of a journalist to provide the necessities of existence, greatly discouraged him, and he fell from melancholy to despair, at one time contemplating suicide as the only escape from his troubles. At length the earnest solicitations of his friends prevailed with him, and he returned to Sydney. Shortly after this he removed to Gosford, on Brisbane Water, where he was cared for and watched over with kindness and gentleness

by Mr. Charles Fagan, J.P. Here he remained many months, and wrote some of his saddest and most melodious verse. He then entered the employ of Messrs. Fagan, at Camden Haven, as a clerk in their timber business. Here he spent some happy years, and did some good work, resulting in the publication of a volume, entitled "*Songs of the Mountains*," which appeared in 1880. It is a splendid addition to Australian literature. In 1881, Sir Henry Parkes again befriended the poet by creating the office of Inspector of State Forests, and conferring the position upon him. Kendall laboured hard in his new office, but his weakened constitution was unable to successfully buffet the climatic rigours to which it was subjected, and he became so broken in health that he was compelled to enter St. Vincent's Hospital, Sydney, as a private patient, ministered to by his devoted wife. There being no hope of his recovery he was removed to the house of his friend Mr. Fagan, where he died on the 1st August, 1882. He was buried by the seaside in the picturesque Waverley cemetery. In November 1886, the Governor of New South Wales unveiled a monument to his memory, which was erected by the people of New South Wales.

In the words of Shelley, which are graven on the poet's monument, let me conclude this brief sketch of his life :—

"Awake him not ! Surely he takes his fill,
Of deep and liquid rest, forgetful of all ill."

J. HOWLETT-ROSS.

LEAVES FROM AUSTRALIAN FORESTS.

1869.

HENRY CLARENCE KENDALL.

I.—PREFATORY SONNETS.

1.

I PURPOSED once to take my pen and write,
Not songs, like some, tormented and awry
With passion, but a cunning harmony
Of words and music caught from glen and height,
And lucid colours born of woodland light,
And shining places where the sea-streams lie ;
But this was when the heat of youth glowed white,
And since I've put the faded purpose by.
I have no faultless fruits to offer you
Who read this book ; but certain syllables
Herein are borrowed from unfooted dells
And secret hollows dear to noontide dew ;
And these at least, though far between and few,
May catch the sense like subtle forest spells.

II.

So take these kindly, even though there be
Some notes that unto other lyres belong,
Stray echoes from the elder sons of song,
And think how from its neighbouring native sea
The pensive shell doth borrow melody.
I would not do the lordly masters wrong
By filching fair words from the shining throng
Whose music haunts me as the wind a tree !
Lo, when a stranger, in soft Syrian glooms
Shot through with sunset, treads the cedar dells,
And hears the breezy ring of elfin bells
Far down by where the white-haired cataract booms,
He, faint with sweetness caught from forest smells,
Bears thence, unwitting, plunder of perfumes.

II.—SEPTEMBER IN AUSTRALIA.

GREY winter hath gone like a wearisome guest,
And, behold, for repayment,
September comes in with the wind of the west,
And the spring in her raiment!
The ways of the frost have been filled of the flowers,
While the forest discovers
Wild wings, with the halo of hyaline hours,
And the music of lovers.

September, the maid with the swift, silver feet,
She glides, and she graces
The valleys of coolness, the slopes of the heat,
With her blossomy traces.
Sweet month, with a mouth that is made of a rose,
She lightens and lingers
In spots where the harp of the evening glows,
Attuned by her fingers.

The stream from its home in the hollow hill slips
In a darling old fashion;
And the day goeth down with a song on its lips
Whose key-note is passion.

Far out in the fierce, bitter front of the sea
I stand, and remember
Dead things that were brothers and sisters of thee,
Resplendent September.

The west, when it blows at the fall of the noon,
And beats on the beaches,
Is filled with a tender and tremulous tune
That touches and teaches;
The stories of Youth, of the burden of Time,
And the death of devotion,
Come back with the wind, and are themes of the rhyme
In the waves of the ocean.

We, having a secret to others unknown
In the cool mountain mosses,
May whisper together, September, alone
Of our loves and our losses.
One word for her beauty, and one for the grace
She gave to the hours ;
And then we may kiss her, and suffer her face
To sleep with the flowers.

High places that knew of the gold and the white
On the forehead of morning,
Now darken and quake, and the steps of the Night
Are heavy with warning !
Her voice in the distance is lofty and loud,
Through its echoing gorges ;
She hath hidden her eyes in a mantle of cloud,
And her feet in the surges !

On the top of the hills, on the turreted cones---
Chief temples of thunder---
The gale, like a ghost in the middle watch moans,
Gliding over and under.
The sea, flying white through the rack and the rain,
Leapeth wild to the forclands ;
And the plover, whose cry is like passion with pain,
Complains in the moorlands.

Oh, season of changes, of shadow and shine,
September the splendid !
My song hath no music to mingle with thine,
And its burden is ended ;
But thou, being born of the winds and the sun,
By mountain, by river,
May lighten and listen, and loiter and run,
With thy voices for ever.

III.—AT EUROMA.

THEY built his mound in the rough red ground
By the dip of a desert dell,
Where all things sweet are killed by the heat,
And scattered o'er flat and fell.
In a burning zone they left him alone,
Past the uttermost western plain ;
And the nightfall dim heard his funeral hymn
In the voices of wind and rain.
The songs austere of the forests drear,
And the echoes of clift and cave,
When the dark is keen where the storm hath been,
Fleet over the far away grave.
And through the days when the torrid rays
Strike down in a coppery gloom,
Some spirit grieves in the perished leaves
Whose theme is that desolate tomb.
No human foot or paw of brute
Halts now where the stranger sleeps ;
But cloud and star his fellows are,
And the rain that sobs and weeps.
The dingo yells by the far iron fells,
The plover is loud in the range,
But they never come near the slumberer here,
Whose rest is a rest without change.
Ah ! in his life had he mother or wife
To wait for his steps on the floor ?
Did beauty wax dim while watching for him
Who passed through the threshold no more ?
Doth it trouble his head ? He is one with the dead ;
He lies by the alien streams ;
And sweeter than sleep is death that is deep
And unvexed by the lordship of dreams.

SONGS FROM THE MOUNTAINS.

1880.

HENRY CLARENCE KENDALL.

I.—FROM COORANBEAN.

YEARS fifty, and seven to boot, have smitten the
children of men
Since sound of a voice or a foot came out of the head
of that glen.
The brand of black devil is there—an evil wind
moaneth around—
There is doom, there is death in the air; a curse
groweth up from the ground!
No noise of the axe or the saw in that hollow unholy
is heard,
No fall of the hoof or the paw—no whirr of the wing
of the bird;
But a gray mother down by the sea, as wan as the
foam of the strait,
Has counted the beads on her knee, these forty-nine
winters and eight.
Whenever the elder is asked—a white-headed man
of the woods—
Of the terrible mystery masked where the dark ever-
lastingly broods,
Be sure he will turn to the bay, with his back to the
glen in the range,
And glide like a phantom away, with a countenance
pallid with change.
From the line of dead timber that lies supine at the
foot of the glade,
The fierce-featured eagle-hawk flies—afraid as a
dove is afraid;
But black in that wilderness dread are a fall and the
forks of a ford—
*Ah! pray and uncover your head, and lean like a
child on the Lord.*

A sinister fog at the wane—at the change of the noon
cometh forth,
Like an ominous ghost in the train of a bitter, black
storm of the North !
At the head of the gully unknown, it hangs like a
spirit of bale,
And the noise of a shriek and a groan strikes up in
the gusts of the gale.
In the throat of a feculent pit is the beard of a bloody-
red sedge ;
And a foam like the foam of a fit sweats out of the
lips of the ledge.
But down in the water of death, in the livid, dead
pool at the base—
*Bow low, with inaudible breath : beseech with the hands
to the face !*

A furlong of fetid, black fen, with gilded green
patches of pond,
Lies dumb by the horns of the glen—at the gates of
the horror beyond ;
And those who have looked on it, tell of the terrible
growths that are there—
The flowerage fostered by Hell—the blossoms that
startle and scare ;
If ever a wandering bird should light on Gehennas
like this,
Be sure that a cry will be heard, and the sound of
the flat adder's hiss.
But hard by the jaws of the bend is a ghastly Thing
matted with moss—
*Ah, Lord ! be a father, a friend, for the sake of the
Christ on the cross.*

Black Tom, with the sinews of five—that never a
hangman could hang—

In the days of the shackle and gyve, broke loose from
the guards of the gang.

Thereafter, for seasons a score, this devil prowled
under the ban :

A mate of red talon and paw—a wolf in the shape
of a man.

But, ringed by ineffable fire, in a thunder and wind
of the North,

The sword of Omnipotent ire—the bolt of high
heaven went forth !

But, wan as the sorrowful foam, a gray mother waits
by the sea

For the boys that have never come home these fifty-
four winters and three.

From the folds of the forested hills there are ravelled
and roundabout tracks,

Because of the terror that fills the strong-handed
men of the axe !

Of the workers away in the range, there is none that
will wait for the night,

When the storm-stricken moon is in change, and the
sinister fog is in sight.

And later and deep in the dark, when the bitter
wind whistles about,

There is never a howl or a bark from the dog in the
kennel without,

But the white fathers fasten the door, and often and
often they start

At a sound, like a foot on the floor, and a touch like
a hand on the heart.

II.—ORARA.

A TRIBUTARY OF THE CLARENCE RIVER.

THE strong sob of the chafing stream,
That seaward fights its way
Down crags of glitter, dells of gleam,
Is in the hills to-day.

But far and faint a grey-winged form
Hangs where the wild lights wane—
The phantom of a bye-gone storm,
A ghost of wind and rain.

The soft white feet of afternoon
Are on the shining meads ;
The breeze is as a pleasant tune
Amongst the happy reeds.

The fierce, disastrous, flying fire,
That made the great caves ring,
And scarred the slope, and broke the spire,
Is a forgotten thing.

The air is full of mellow sounds ;
The wet hill-heads are bright ;
And, down the fall of fragrant grounds,
The deep ways flame with light.

A rose-red space of stream I see,
Past banks of tender fern ;
A radiant brook, unknown to me,
Beyond its upper turn.

The singing silver life I hear,
Whose home is in the green,
Far-folded woods of fountains clear,
Where I have never been.

Ah, brook above the upper band,
I often long to stand,
Where you in soft, cool shades descend
From the untrodden land.

Ah, folded woods, that hide the grace
Of moss and torrents strong,
I often wish to know the face
Of that which sings your song !

But I may linger long, and look,
Till night is over all ;
My eyes will never see the brook,
Or strange, sweet waterfall.

The world is round me with its heat,
And toil, and cares that tire ;
I cannot with my feeble feet
Climb after my desire.

But, on the lap of lands unseen,
Within a secret zone,
There shine diviner gold and green
Than man has ever known.

And where the silver waters sing,
Down hushed and holy dells,
The flower of a celestial spring—
A tenfold splendour dwells.

Yea, in my dream of fall and brook
By far sweet forests furled,
I see that light for which I look
In vain through all the world.

The glory of a larger sky,
On slopes of hills sublime,
That speak with God and Morning, high
Above the ways of Time !

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Ah! haply, in this sphere of change,
Where shadows spoil the beam,
It would not do to climb the range,
And test my radiant Dream.

The slightest glimpse of yonder place,
Untrodden and alone,
Might wholly kill that nameless grace,
The charm of the Unknown.

And therefore, though I look and long,
Perhaps the lot is bright,
Which keeps the river of the song
A beauty out of sight.

III.—“AFTER MANY YEARS.”

THE song that once I dreamed about,
The tender, touching thing,
As radiant as the rose without—
The love of wind and wing;
The perfect verses to the tune
Of woodland music set,
As beautiful as afternoon,
Remain unwritten yet.

It is too late to write them now—
The ancient fire is cold;
No ardent lights illumine the brow,
As in the days of old.
I cannot dream the dream again;
But, when the happy birds
Are singing in the sunny rain,
I think I hear its words.

I think I hear the echo still
Of long forgotten tones,
When evening winds are on the hill,
And sunset fires the cones.
But only in the hours supreme,
With songs of land and sea,
The lyrics of the leaf and stream
This echo comes to me.

No longer doth the earth reveal
Her gracious green and gold ;
I sit where youth was once, and feel
That I am growing old.
The lustre from the face of things
Is wearing all away ;
Like one who halts with tired wings,
I rest and muse to-day.

There is a river in the range
I love to think about ;
Perhaps the searching feet of change
Have never found it out.
Ah ! oftentimes I used to look
Upon its banks, and long
To steal the beauty of that brook
And put it in a song.

I wonder if the slopes of moss,
In dreams so dear to me—
The falls of flower and flower-like floss—
Are as they used to be !
I wonder if the waterfalls,
The singers far and fair,
That gleamed between the wet, green walls,
Are still the marvels there !

Ah! let me hope that in that place
The old familiar things
To which I turn a wistful face
Have never taken wings.
Let me retain the fancy still,
That, past the lordly range,
There always shines, in folds of hill,
One spot secure from change!

I trust that yet the tender screen
That shades a certain nook
Remains, with all its gold and green,
The glory of the brook.
It hides a secret to the birds
And waters only known—
The letters of two lovely words—
A poem on a stone.

Perhaps the lady of the past
Upon these lines may light,
The purest verses and the last
That I may ever write.
She need not fear a word of blame;
Her tale the flowers keep;—
The wind that heard me breathe her name
Has been for years asleep.

But in the night, and when the rain
The troubled torrents fills,
I often think I see again
The river in the hills:
And when the day is very near,
And birds are on the wing,
My spirit fancies it can hear
The song I cannot sing.

George Augustus Simcox.

1841.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SIMCOX, poet, critic and scholar, was born in London in the year 1841. He was elected to a scholarship at Corpus Christi, Oxford, in 1858, and in 1867 published his classical drama "Prometheus Unbound," which secured able and generous notice at the hands of Professor Conington, in the *Athenæum*. An edition of Juvenal's Satires was published in the same year, and in 1869 a volume of "Poems and Romances" Since that date he has issued editions of Thucydides, Demosthenes, and other classics, and in 1883 a "History of Latin Literature." Mr. Simcox has also contributed essays on Renan and Shelley to the *North British Review*, on Charles Kingsley and Harriet Martineau to the *Fortnightly*, and on Professor Seeley's "Natural Religion" to the *Nineteenth Century*, as well as occasional *critiques* to the *Academy* and other papers.

Mr. Simcox's verse, like so much of the poetic work of his period, has been said to show the influence of both Swinburne and Morris. "Literary manner," however, as Professor Conington put it in this connection, "is evidently rather an affair of infection than specific contagion. It is in the air, and plastic natures catch it readily. The great Elizabethan dramatists with strong personal differences have a marked family likeness, and it need be

no impeachment of the individual eminence of the classical revivalists of our day that the writings of the one should constantly recall those of another." There is, moreover, an element in Mr. Simcox's poetry, which gives it a distinctive feature, and makes it interesting as an illustration of the influence of the speculative and sceptical tendencies of the time upon an eager and sanguine temperament. The "Romances" are largely modern variations on old themes—legends, classical and mediæval, refined and qualified by good taste and judgment, and indicating the subtle workings of a mind grappling with high and all but insoluble problems, earnest in its searchings after truth, but baffled in its attempts. These themes he has treated with warm fancy and imagination, and clothed in the veritable glamour of romanticism. That the author's love of fable, allegory, and parable often carries him beyond the bounds of the intelligible is undoubtedly true, and that some of his poems have been correctly called "elaborate riddles" need not be gainsaid; but some of them are less open to this charge than others, and most of them offer to minds as romantic as the poet's own the fascination of the veiled light which shrouds the borders of enchanted ground.

ALFRED H. MILES.

POEMS AND ROMANCES.

1869.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SIMCOX.

THE SOLDAN'S DAUGHTER.

I.

THE Soldan's daughter of Babylon
Went out to pluck her roses
Where scents are shed from an alley dun,
As starry even closes ;
As she passed out into the clear moonlight,
She saw on the sward a Christian knight.

The moon shone clear on his toilworn hands,
On his face unkempt and pale,
On the rusty links and the caitiff bands
Which he wore for knightly mail ;
But his brow was high, and his dreams seemed fair,
As the night wind lifted his yellow hair.

The Soldan's daughter dared not stay,
She was watch'd by too many eyes ;
But she dropt a rose and a scroll to say,
" A word is enough for the wise."
And she came with the morning light alone
To hear the prisoner make his moan.

" Mahound be merciful to thee,
That thou mayest take our law,"
She said. " In sooth it pitied me
When all thy pain I saw ;
My father would set thee in high estate,
And give thee a beautiful maid to mate."

Thereat he louted on knee full low,
Said, "Mary pity thee,
And give thee grace her Son to know,
For thy great courtesie."
She said, "I have found God very good,—
The river is parched when it leaves the wood."

He said, "The rivers flow into the sea,
And true hearts into Christendom;
Flce hence for the love of Christ with me."

She said, "For thy love I will come."
They loosed a boat on the river that night,
And floated adown the soft moonlight.

They had floated a mile among the reeds,
As he cooled his hand in the water,
When they heard behind them a tramp of steeds,
For the Soldan had missed his daughter.
He spurred out into the river amain,
He waved his spear to his panting train.

He laid on the boat a mailed hand,
The boat rocked to and fro,
Cried, "Caitiff and craven, turn and stand,
Thou shalt not carry it so;
To steal a maid from her father's land."
She said, "I chose to go."
The Red-cross Knight leaned out of the boat,
He caught at the long white beard, and smote
With his gardening knife on the Soldan's throat;

Said, "There is a miscreant gone to hell,
And now our love is free,
And you shall be baptized, and dwell
With me in Christentie."

The lady answered, "He loved me well,—
Is it all an evil dream?"
The charger started, the dead man fell,
He floated down the stream:
The knight rose softly and spread a sail,
And they floated on till the stars grew pale.

II.

They sailed by river, they sailed by sea,
And the knight was blithe of cheer,
As he saw the hills of Christentic
And the holy shrines appear;
But the lady lay on his breast in pain,
Said, "I shall not see my garden again."

And now they have furled their sail at last,
And anchored in the bay;
Then hand in hand to the church they passed
Of the nuns who walk in grey.
He said, "They will wash your spirit clean,
And then I can wed you, my own heart's queen."

"Oh, why are you shorn, lady abbess?" she said,
"And why do you walk in grey?
And you are fair, yet you are not wed,—
Is your true knight far away?"
"We are wed to a Spouse Who dwells afar,
Who hath built us a bower in the Morning Star."

"And what is His name, lady abbess?" she said;
"And why has He left you here?
And why has He bidden you bow the head,
And made your life so drear?"
"We are God's brides, Who died for us,
And till we die we serve Him thus."

"What a cruel God to use you so !

What a foolish God to die !—

Without dying He made the sweet flowers blow,
And the bright sun shine in the sky."

But we are more than flower or sun,
Our life begins when theirs is done."

"But still you are little to God," she said ;

"And why need He die for you ?

He surely is mighty to raise the dead,
Without His dying too."

"He died to be wholly one with us,
So dying daily we serve Him thus."

"And He died for all the world, you say ;

Did He die for my father and me ?

For I left my father far away,
Before I crossed the sea ;

My love smote sore, and my father is dead,
For he followed us close the night we fled."

"Yes, He died for both," the Abbess said,

"And His love will make you whole,

And remember to pray when you are wed,

And give alms for your father's soul,

That Mary's prayer and Jesus' grace

May lighten his spirit's dwelling-place."

"And how did He woo you to be His bride,

What gifts did He give to you ? "

She caught her breath, and she blushed and sighed,

"I wish He would woo me too ;

I would pray for my father, and God would hear ;

He would surely answer His bride's first prayer."

"He wooed me as He woos you now
By my own heart's desire ;
He plaited thorns about my brow,
And set my heart on fire ;
But can you leave your own true knight,
Who brought you from darkness to God's good light ?"

Her true knight stood at the convent grate,
And he pressed her lily hand ;
He said, " It is not yet too late,
She does not understand ;
Leave her awhile alone with me."
The Abbess answered, " She is free."

He said, " Remember, you loved me well,
And how when I wooed you to flee ;
You came not caring for heaven or hell,
Came not for Christ but me."
" That was very long ago," she said,
" My garden is withered, my father is dead."

" We sing full long, and we fast full late,
And our times of prayer are seven,"
The Abbess said, as she shut the grate.
" Would you shut me out of heaven ?"
" Can you give yourself to be crucified
For a single kiss at your Husband's side ?"

" I do not know, but take me in,
He is all that is left me now.
I feel the blood from His hands begin
To tingle upon my brow."
They took her in, and she bowed the head ;
In a year and a day her pure soul fled,
As she spake her marriage vow.

As she passed in, a novice peeped out
From under her veil of white,
And her blue eyes, as they roved about,
Met the eyes of the Red-cross Knight.
She said, "It were merry to be with him;"
He said, "She is bright, the cloister dim."

So the Red-cross Knight and the novice were wed,
And they sailed across the sea;
And they sailed past the realm of Babylon,
And he set up his banner on Lebanon
To harry Soldanrie,
From a castle, where mass was never said,
Far beyond Christentie.

SONNET.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SIMCOX.

A CHILL IN SUMMER.

I WENT upon a meadow bright with gold
Of buttercups, which glistened on the green
Of summer grass, veiled with a filmy sheen
Of gossamer, whereby a river rolled
His shrunken waters by a city old,
Leaving large space of poisonous ooze between
The herbage and his waves, which were not clean,
And in the air there was a touch of cold.
Then my thoughts troubled me, I knew not why;
But everything seemed still, and nought at rest.
The sun grew dim, the faint wind seemed to sigh,
The pale blue seemed to shiver as unblest,
White fleecy clouds came scudding up the sky,
And turned to ashen darkness in the west,

John Payne.

1842.

MR. JOHN PAYNE was born August 23rd, 1842, and has followed the profession of a solicitor. His life, so far as known to the public or ourselves, is marked solely by his appearances as an author. In 1870 he published "A Masque of Shadows," in 1871 "Intaglios," in 1872 "Songs of Life and Death," in 1878 "Lautrec," in 1880 "New Poems." The translations for the Villon Society which have given him so unique a reputation, appeared—Villon's Poems in 1878, the "Arabian Nights" in 1882 and subsequent years, and "The Decameron" in 1886.

If Mr. Payne stands higher as a translator than as an original author, the reason is not that his original work is inconsiderable, but that translation is a field in which he has absolutely no rival. No modern English poet has attempted anything like the rich and massive intricacy of his translations from Villon, and, with the possible exceptions of Mr. Swinburne and Mr. Robert Bridges, none can be named who could attempt the like feat with any prospect of success. Considering the late Sir Richard Burton's long practice in colloquial Arabic, his version of the "Arabian Nights" must in all probability be more accurate than Mr. Payne's; but, regarded as an example of English style, it is far less classical. As an original poet, Mr. Payne's exceptional command

of poetic form counts for less, and his exceptional gift of poetic transfusion counts for nothing. One great advantage he has over most competitors, his objectivity, his power of telling a story with great force and point, sometimes with breathless rapidity and overmastering energy, as of a man wholly possessed by the terror of his tale. This impetuous vigour is especially conspicuous in "The Rime of Redemption" and "Lautrec." If there is less of this peculiar power in the author's later productions, it still is not absent from "Thorgerda," while "Salvestra" displays qualities of a higher order still. It is difficult to account for the neglect of a poem so masterly in narrative, so felicitous in diction, so instinct with the truest pathos. Mr. Payne's appearances in his own person are, in our estimation, less successful than his objective poems. When he has no story to tell he seems to have comparatively little to say; his lyrics seem to owe less to the inspiration of the lyrist than to the skill of the artist: perfect indeed in external form, but not always irreproachable in diction. Sometimes, however, as in his "Malay Pantoum," the form is so captivating as to seem of itself sufficient warrant for the existence of the piece.

RICHARD GARNETT.

SONGS OF LIFE AND DEATH.

1872.

JOHN PAYNE.

1.—SIR ERWIN'S QUESTING.

“O H, whither, whither ridest thou, Sir Erwin ?
The glitter of the dawn is in the sky,
And I hear the laverock singing
Where the silken corn is springing
And the green-and-gold of summer's on the rye.”

“O lady fair, I ride towards the setting ;
For the glamour of the West is on my heart,
And I hear a dream-voice calling
To the land where dews are falling,
And the blossoms of the springtime ne'er depart.”

“Oh what, oh what thing seekest thou, Sir Erwin ?
Is life no longer pleasant to thy soul ?
Am I no more heart's dearest,
Though the summer skies are clearest
And the gold of June is fresh on copse and knoll ?”

“O sweet, I seek the land where love is holy
And the bloom of youth is ever on the flowers ;
The land where joy is painless
And the eyes' delight is stainless,
And the break of love faints never in the weary noontide hours!”

"Oh rest awhile, oh rest awhile, Sir Erwin !
The hills are yet ungilded by the sun.
Oh tarry till the morning
Have pierced the mists of dawning
And the weariness of noon be past and done !"

"O lady fair, I may not tarry longer !
The sun is climbing fast above the grey,
And I hear the trumpets blowing
Where the eastern clouds are glowing
And themists of night are breaking from the city of the day !"

Far out into the greenwood rides Sir Erwin,
Oh, far into the wild wood rideth he !
And there meet him sisters seven,
When the sun is high in heaven,
And the gold of noon is bright on flower and tree.

Oh, wonder-lovely maidens were the seven !
With mantles of the crimson and the green ;
With red-gold rings and girdles,
And sea-blue shoes and kirtles,
And eyes that shone like cornflowers in their locks' corn-
golden sheen.

"Oh, light thee down and dwell with us, heart's dearest !
And we will sing thee wonder-lovely songs !
And we will strew with roses
The place where thy repose is,
And teach thee all the rapture that to our love belongs !

"Oh, light thee down and dwell with us, heart's dearest !
We have full many a secret of delight :
Thy day shall be one sweetness
Of love in its completeness,
And the nightingale shall sing to thee the whole en-
chanted night !"

"Oh, woe is me ! I may not stay, fair maidens ;
My quest is for a country far and wild ;
The land where springs the Iris,¹
Where the end of all desire is
And the thought of love lives ever undefiled."

"Oh, light thee down and dwell with us, heart's dearest !
Thou wilt wear thy youth to eld in such a quest :
For it lies beyond the setting,
In the land of the Forgetting,
In the bosom of the everlasting rest !"

Far on into the greenwood rides Sir Erwin,
Oh, far into the wild wood rideth he !
And he sees a fair wife sitting,
At the hour when light is flitting
And the gold of sunset gathers on the sea.

Oh, very fair and stately was her seeming,
And very sweet and dreamful were her eyes !
And as she sat a-weaving,
She sang a song of grieving,
Full low and sweet to anguish, mixt with sighs.

"Oh, tell me what thou weavest there, fair lady,
I prithee tell me quickly what thou art !"
"I am more fair than seeming,
And I weave the webs of dreaming
For the solace of the world-awearied heart."

"Oh, prithee tell me, tell to me, fair lady,
What song is that thou singest, and so sweet ?"
"I sing the songs of sorrow
That is golden in the morrow,
And I charm with them the sad hours' leaden feet."

¹ There is a legend that the more distant-seeming end of the rainbow springs in fairyland.

"Oh, light thee down and dwell with me, heart's dearest!
Thou hast wandered till thy face is furrowed deep;
But I will charm earth's cumbers
From the rose-bed of thy slumbers,
And will fold thee in the lotus-leaves of sleep."

"Oh, woe is me, oh, woe is me, fair lady!
A hand of magic draws me on my quest
Towards the land of story,
Where glows the sunset-glory
And the light of love fades never from the West."

"Oh, light thee down and stay with me, heart's dearest!
Thine eyes will lose their lustre on the way;
For it lies far out to yonder,
Where the setting sun dips under
And the funeral pyres are burning for the day."

Oh, far thorough the greenwood rides Sir Erwin,
Oh, far out of the wild wood rideth he!
And he comes where waves are plashing,
And the wild white crests are dashing
On the pebbles of a gray and stormy sea.

Far down towards the tide-flow rides Sir Erwin,
Oh, far adown the shingle rideth he!
And he sees a shallop rocking
Upon the wild waves' flocking,
And an ancient steersman sitting in the lee.

Oh, very weird and gruesome was that steersman,
With hair that mocked for white the driven snow!
The light of some strange madness
Was in his eyes' gray sadness,
And he seemed like some pale ghost of long ago.

“ Oh, sail with me ! oh, sail with me, Sir Erwin !
Thou hast wandered in thy questing far enough.
I will bring thee where Love's ease is
For ever, though the breezes
Blow rudely, and the broad green way be rough.”

“ Reach hand to me, reach hand to me, old steersman !
I will sail with thee for questing o'er the main.
Although thine eyes look coldly,
I will dare the venture boldly ;
For I weary for an ending of my pain.”

Oh, long they rode on billows, in the glory
Of the gold and crimson standards of the West ;
So came they, in the setting,
To the land of the Forgetting,
Where the weary and the woful are at rest.

“ Oh, what can be this land that is so peaceful,
That lies beyond the setting of the sun ?
I hear a dream-bell ringing,
And I hear a strange sweet singing,
And the tender gold of twilight's on the dun.

“ Oh, what are these fair forms that float towards me ?
And what are these that clasp me by the hand,
As if they long had sought me ?
And what art thou hast brought me
O'er the ocean to this dream-enchanted strand ? ”

“ Fair knight, this is the land of the Hereafter ;
And the name that men do know me by is Death :
For the love, from life that's flying,
Lives ever with the dying,
And the stains of it are purged by 'scape of breath ! ”

II.—THE BALLAD OF MAY MARGARET.

OH, sweet is the spring in coppice and wold,
And the bonny fresh flowers are springing !
May Margaret walks in the merry greenwood,
To hear the blithe birds singing.

May Margaret walks in the heart of the treen,
Under the green boughs straying ;
And she hath seen the king of the elves
Under the lindens playing.

“ Oh, wed thou with me, May Margaret,
All in the merry green Maytime,
And thou shalt dance all the moonlit night
And sleep on flowers in the daytime ! ”

“ O king of the elves, it may not be,
For the sake of the folk that love me ;
I may not be queen of the elfland green,
For the fear of the heaven above me.”

“ Oh, an' thou wilt be the elfland's queen,
Thy robe shall be blue and golden ;
And thou shalt drink of the red red wine,
In blue-bell chalicés holden.”

“ O king of the elves, it may not be,
My father at home would miss me ;
An' if I were queen of the elfland green,
My mother would never kiss me.’

"Oh, an' thou wilt be the elfland's queen,
Thy shoon shall be seagreen sendal;
Thy thread shall be silk as white as milk,
And snow-white silver thy spindle."

He hath led her by the lilywhite hand
Into the hillside palace;
And he hath given her wine to drink
Out of the blue-bell chalice.

Now seven long years are over and gone,
Since the thorn began to blossom;
And she hath brought the elf-king a son,
And beareth it on her bosom.

"A boon, a boon, my husband the king,
For the sake of my babe I cry thee!"
"Now ask what thou wilt, May Margaret;
There's nothing I may deny thee."

"Oh, let me go home for a night and a day,
To show my mother her daughter
And fetch a priest to my bonny wee babe,
To sprinkle the holy water!

"Oh, let me go home for a night and a day
To the little town by the river!
And we will turn to the merry greenwood,
And dwell with the elves for ever."

Oh, out of the elfland are they gone,
Mother and babe together,
And they are come in the blithe springtime
To the land of the blowing heather.

"Oh, where is my mother I used to kiss,
And my father that oft caressed me ?
They both lie cold in the churchyard mould ;
And I have no whither to rest me.

"Oh, where is the dove that I used to love,
And the lover that used to love me ?
The one is dead, the other is fled !
But the heaven is left above me.

"I pray thee, sir priest, to christen my babe
With bell and candle and psalter ;
And I will give up this bonny gold cup,
To stand on the holy altar."

"O queen of the elves, it may not be !
The elf must suffer damnation,
Unless thou wilt bring thy costliest thing,
As guerdon for its salvation."

"Oh, surely my life is my costliest thing !
I give it and never rue it.
An' if thou wilt save my innocent babe,
The blood of my heart ensue it !"

The priest hath made the sign of the cross,
The white-robed choristers sing ;
But the babe is dead ere blessing be said—
May Margaret's costliest thing.

Oh, drearily and loud she shrieked, as if
Her soul from her breast would sever !
And she hath gone to the merry greenwood,
To dwell with the elves for ever.

III.—A SONG BEFORE THE GATES OF DEATH.

"Sed satis est jam posse mori."

(SUGGESTED BY MR. BURNE JONES' PICTURE "A LAMENT.")

I.

S MITE strings, and fill the courts with thy lament !
Yea, let the singing thunder through the halls ;
Wake all the echoes from the funeral walls,
From aisle to roof, and porch to battlement !
Give forth thy sorrow till the roses' scent
Is blent for dole into the lilies' breath,
And all the air is faint with balms of death,
Seeing the glory of the day is spent,
And Death is very nigh upon our feet !
Sing out, and let the winds be filled with song !
Haply, the clangours of the chant shall beat
Against the great gods' portals, till the throng
Immortal hear in it the thund'rous feet
Of Fate, and tremble for remembered wrong.

II.

Give me the vase. Drink deep as for the dead !
Drink Life and all its joys a long good-bye !—
Surely, the wine shall hearten us to die.
Blood of the grape ! Wine, that the earth has bled
From her slit painful veins, living and red
With all the deaths that have won life for thee !
I pour thee out for sign and memory,
For thanksgiving to life and goodlihead
Of the green earth and all her kindly hours !
The homage of the dead, that in her sods
Shall soon lie low, and rot beneath the showers
Of the round year ; yet, when the kind Fate nods,
Mayhap shall glorify the grass in flowers—
A godlike homage ! for the dead are gods.

III.

The dead are gods ! seeing they lie and sleep,
Folded within the mantle of the night,
Ay, more than gods ! For lo, the heavy might
Of Death enrounds them ! Never do they weep,
Nor smile sad smiles, nor strain against the sweep
Of rugged Doom. There is no Fate for them,
Lying, close-companied, within the hem
Of the pale fateful god : the long years creep
Over their heads, and may not break their rest.

Who would not choose to die, when life is worn
And wan with wrong unto the utterest ?
The fierce gods chase us to the brink with scorn ;
Yet smite the strings ! We are not so forlorn
But we may die, seeing that death is best.

IV.

Curse we the gods and die ! Give me the lyre.

Now, Zeus, fling thunders from thine armouries !
And Helios, rain down sunbolts from thy skies
We die and fear ye not, and all your ire,
Impotent as the flaming of a fire
Against the dead. There is no hope for us,
Save of a sinking sweet and slumberous
Into the arms of rest.

Pile up the pyre !

Great father Zeus ! we reck not of thy grace !
It is thy wrath we crave with our last breath.
Look down in all thy terrors, King of Life !
Consume us with the splendours of thy face !
So shall the keen fire solve us from our strife,
And our sad souls be ravished unto death !

IV.—VOCATION SONG.

“La poésie est semblable à l'amandier : ses fleurs sont parfumées et ses fruits sont amers.”—ALOYSIUS BERTRAND,
Gaspard de la Nuit.

LORD, what unto Thy servants shall be given,
 That have so long, in pain and doubt and strife,
For Thee with hand and heart and song hard striven
 What time Thou givest out the crowns of life ?

What time the lances of the light are driven
 Athwart the gloom that holds Life's holiest throne,
What time the curtains of the mist are riven,
 What time the trumpets of the dawn are blown ?

We, who to tunes of love and light, unknowing,
 Have chastened all the jarring chords of life,—
We, who with lips with milk and honey flowing,
 Have fed on galls of bitterness and strife,—

We do not ask of Thee, as this our guerdon,
 To live a shining life among Thy blest ;
'Twould be for us but shifting of our burden,
 Not the fulfilment of the longed-for rest.

We have no kin with those uplifted faces,
 Those ordered minstrels that before Thee bow,
Set rank on rank upon the holy places,
 With stiff sharp laurel fringing every brow.

For us, no balms of Heaven could stay our yearning,
 No crown of woven lilies and pale palms,
No City with eternal glory burning,
 Set in the golden stress of ceaseless psalms.

Our souls are weary with the stress of seeing,
 Wasted with burning thoughts that throb and throng,
Worn with the straining ecstasy of Being,
 That passes through our heart-strings into song.

Our lives are sick with seeing all things' sadness,
Sad earth beneath us, and sad heaven above ;
Life's sweets to us are but as herbs of madness,
Sweet poison of the bitter bliss of Love.

Our souls are weary of the changing courses,
The sick alternative of smiles and tears,
Are weary of the unrelenting forces,
Are weary of the burden of the years ;

The burden of the winds in river-sedges,
The burden of the torrents and the sea,
The burden of the woodbirds in the hedges :
"Time is, Time was, and Time will cease to be !"

Is it as nothing that the same flame courses
Athwart Thy veins that riots in our own ?
Is it as nothing that the selfsame sources
Of light and life to us as Thee are known ?

Shall we 'scape smiting with the 'scape of breath ?
Shall we aye rest from bitter song's fierce smarts ?
Will not the song-stress thrill the brain of death ?
Will not the song-pulse throb in our cold hearts ?

Lord God, wilt Thou not help us, that have striven
To do Thy work so hardly and so long ?
Wilt Thou not give us rest from Thy high heaven,
And peace from bitter weaving of sweet song ?

Save us, O Lord, before the fire consume us,
Ere the hot chrism shrivel body and soul !
Let the soft arms of some sweet death entomb us
And hold us fast from love and joy and dole !

V.—A SOUL'S ANTIPHON.

I.

MY soul burst forth in singing,
My heart flowered like a rose ;
Chimes of sweet songs fled ringing
Along the forest close.
Is it the new year springing ?
Is it the May that blows ?
No ; it was none of those.

Among the trees came flying
A spirit like a flame ;
A sound of songs and sighing,
Mixed, round his presence came—
A sound of sweet airs dying,
The music of a name,
Fainting for its sweet shame.

A white shape wreathed with flowers,
A winged shape like a dove ;
Hands soft as peach-bloom showers ;
Eyes like an orange-grove
In whose enchanted bowers
The magic fire-flies rove :
I knew his name ;—'twas Love.

“O soul !” I said, “the voices
That flutter in thy breast,
The yearning that rejoices
In its own vague unrest,
Are all in vain : the choice is
'Twixt Life and Love's behest.
Choose now, which is the best.”

The winged white Love came calling,
With words as sweet as lays
When hawthorn-snows are falling
About the forest ways.
His speech was so enthralling,
Such spells were in his gaze,
My heart flowered with his praise.

He came to me with kisses,
And looked into my eyes ;
My soul brimmed up with blisses,
But with the bliss came sighs,
As when a serpent hisses
Beneath flower-tapestries
And moss piled cushion-wise.

The sad old thoughts came flocking
Up to that look of his :
For memory and its mocking,
I could not smile, y wis ;
It was like the unlocking
Of doors on an abyss
Wherein old living is.

It was like grief recounting
The happy times of yore ;
It was like gray waves mounting
A lost sun-golden shore,
Like sad thoughts over-counting
The sweet things gone before,
The days that are no more.

And as I looked with sighing
Into the sweet shape's eyes,
I saw a serpent lying
'Mid balms of Paradise ;

I knew my dole undying,
The presage sad and wise,
The worm that never dies.
Love laughed and fled, a-leaping,
Between the flower-flushed breres,
And left my sad thoughts keeping
The vigil of the years :
My soul burst out in weeping ;
I saw my hopes and fears
Troop by, enbalmed in tears.

II.

My soul burst forth in weeping,
My heart swelled like a sea ;
There came sad wind-notes sweeping
Across the golden lea :
Is autumn past, and reaping ?
Is winter come for me ?
No, no, it cannot be.
Among the trees came slowly
A spirit like a flower,
A lily pale and holy,
White as a winter hour :
Sad peace possessed him wholly ;
Around him, like a sower,
He cast a silver shower ;
A shower of silver lilies,
Each one a haunting thought :
It was as when a rill is
Across waste rose-bowers brought,
And all the heart's grief still is,
And one has pain in nought :
Such peace their perfumes wrought.

"O soul!" I said, "the sadness
That is in this one's breath
Is sweeter than the madness
That round Love fluttereth :
This one shall bring heart's gladness
And balms of peace and faith ;
For lo ! his name is Death."

The pale sweet shape came strewing
Flower-tokens on the grass ;
His face was the renewing
Of love in a dream-glass ;
His speech was like bird-wooing,
When moonlight-shadows pass.
My soul sighed out, "Alas !"

He came to me with sighing,
My hand in his he took ;
My soul wept nigh to dying,
For all his piteous look :
Yet in his eyes was lying
Peace, as of some still brook
Laid through a forest-nook.

The memories of past sorrow
Brimmed up my eyes with tears ;
I could not choose but borrow
Fresh grief from the waste years :
And yet some sweet to-morrow
Smiled through, as when rain clears
Off, and the sun appears.

It was as if one, peering
 Into a well of woe,
Saw all the shadow clearing
 From the brown deeps below—
Saw sapphire skies appearing,
 And woods with moss aglow,
 And Spring in act to blow.

With tearful looks, I, gazing
 Into the sad shape's eyes,
Saw a new magic tracing
 New lovely mysteries ;
I saw new hope upraising
 A new love's Paradise,
 And clear moon-silvern skies.

My soul fled forth in singing,
 My heart flowered like a rose ;
Death smiled, with sweet tears springing,
 'Twixt smile and smile that rose.
His arms closed round me, clinging :
 Peace came, and clipt me close—
 Peace, such as no love knows.

VI.—A SONG OF WILLOW.

LOVE and Life have had their day,
 Long ago ;
Hope and Faith have fled away
With the roses and the May ;
 This is but an idle show :
 Come away !

Seekest thou for flowers of June,
Roses red ?
Listenest for the linnet's tune ?
Here the night-fowl wails the moon ;
Here are lilies of the dead,
Tear-bestrewn.

Thinkest Love will come again,
Fresh and sweet,
With the apple-blossoms' rain ?
Many a day dead Love has lain,
Folded in the winding-sheet.
Hope is vain.

See, Death beckons from the gloom,
(Come away !)
Life is wasted from its room,
Love is faded from its bloom ;
Come and nestle in the gray
Of the tomb.

Come away ! The bed is laid,
Soft and deep ;
In the blossomed linden's shade,
Underneath the moon-pale glade,
In the quiet shalt thou sleep,
Unaffrayed.

Kiss thy love upon the lips
Once again.
I will fold thee in the eclipse
Of the night where shadows stray,
And sleep healeth heart and brain :
Come away !

NEW POEMS.

1880.

JOHN PAYNE.

I.—A BIRTHDAY SONG.

I.

THE rose-time and the roses
 Call to me, dove of mine ;
I hear the bird-song closes
 Ring out in the sunshine ;
In all the wood-reposes
 There runs a magic wine
 Of music all divine.
All things have scent and singing ;
 The happy earth is ringing
With praise of love and June ;
 Have I alone no tune,
No sound of music-making
 To greet my love's awaking,
 This golden summer noon ?

II.

Ah love ! my roses linger
 For sunshine of thine eyes ,
For Love, the music bringer,
 My linnets wait to rise ;
All dumb are birds and singer :
 The song in kisses dies
 And sound of happy sighs.
What need of songs and singing,
When love for us is ringing
 Bells of enchanted gold ?
 Dear, whilst my arms enfold
My love, our kisses fashion
Tunes of more perfect passion
 Than verses new or old.

II.—LOVE'S AUTUMN.

(FIELD'S NOCTURN IN D MINOR.)

YES, love, the Spring shall come again,
But not as once it came :
Once more in meadow and in lane,
The daffodils shall flame,
The cowslips blow, but all in vain ;
Alike, yet not the same.

The roses that we plucked of old
Were dewed with heart's delight ;
Our gladness steeped the primrose-gold
In half its lovely light :
The hopes are long since dead and cold,
That flushed the wind-flowers' white.

Oh, who shall give us back our Spring ?
What spell can fill the air
With all the birds of painted wing,
That sang for us whilere ?
What charm reclothe with blossoming
Our lives, grown blank and bare ?

What sun can draw the ruddy bloom
Back to hope's faded rose ?
What stir of summer re-illumine
Our hearts wreckt garden-close ?
What flowers can fill the empty room
Where now the nightshade grows ?

'Tis but the Autumn's chilly sun
That mocks the glow of May ;
'Tis but the pallid bindweeds run
Across our garden way,
Pale orchids, scentless every one,
Ghosts of the summer day.

Yet, if it must be so, 'tis well :
What part have we in June ?
Our hearts have all forgot the spell
That held the summer noon ;
We echo back the cuckoo's knell,
And not the linnet's tune.

What should we do with roses now,
Whose cheeks no more are red ?
What violets should deck our brow,
Whose hopes long since are fled ?
Recalling many a wasted vow
And many a faith struck dead.

Bring heath and pimpernel and rue,
The Autumn's sober flowers :
At least their scent will not renew
The thought of happy hours,
Nor drag sad memory back unto
That lost sweet time of ours.

Faith is no sun of summertide,
Only the pale calm light
That, when the Autumn clouds divide,
Hangs in the watchet height,—
A lamp, wherewith we may abide
The coming of the night.

And yet, beneath its languid ray,
The moorlands bare and dry
Bethink them of the summer day
And flower, far and nigh,
With fragile memories of the May,
Blue as the August sky.

These are our flowers: they have no scent
To mock our waste desire,
No hint of bygone ravishment
To stir the faded fire:
The very soul of sad content
Dwells in each azure spire.

I have no violets: you laid
Your blight upon them all:
It was your hand, alas! that made
My roses fade and fall,
Your breath my lilies that forbade
To come at Summer's call.

Yet take these scentless flowers and pale,
The last of all my year:
Be tender to them; they are frail;
But if thou hold them dear,
I'll not their brighter kin bewail,
That now lie cold and sere.

Frederic W. H. Myers.

1843.

MR. F. W. H. MYERS was born on the 6th of February, 1843. His father came of an old Yorkshire stock, and was the incumbent of St. John's, Keswick; well known as one of the first pioneers of liberal ideas within the English Church, and as the author of "Catholic Thoughts," a volume of essays which long circulated in private before it was finally given to the public not many years ago. His mother was a daughter of the Leeds family of Marshall, sister of Lady Monteagle and the first Mrs. Whewell. Mr. F. Myers lost his father in early boyhood, and was educated at Cheltenham, where his mother resides, and afterwards at Trinity College, Cambridge. During his academical career he distinguished himself by exceptional ability and by a marked vivacity of temperament—by something restless and imperious, a *perfervidum ingenium* belonging to his personality, perhaps also to the double strain of Yorkshire blood in him. It does not appear that the external conditions of his life influenced the development of his artistic talent to any considerable extent. On the other hand the humanistic training, to which he so willingly responded, left ineffaceable traces upon his manner of expression. While a poet of emotion in the truest sense, he is also pre-eminently a poet of form and culture.

For many years Mr. Myers has been an Inspector of Schools ; and latterly, his eminent powers of intellect and indefatigable energy have been devoted to psychological studies in connection with the "Psychical Research Society," which he helped to found. Those who feel the main pulses of his poetry, will understand the significance of this self-dedication to a scientific cause, which has for the singer of the "Promise of Immortality" a peculiar, I might almost say, a personal interest.

Mr. F. Myers' principal published writings are "St. Paul" (1865), "Poems" (1870), "Wordsworth" in the English Men of Letters series (1880), "Essays Classical and Modern" (1881), and "The Renewal of Youth" (1882). He is also part author of a voluminous and important work called "Phantasms of the Living" (1886).

The most remarkable points about Mr. Myers' early development were the emphatic manner in which his literary qualities emerged, and the devotion he displayed for Virgil at an age when youths regard that prince of Latin poets with abhorrence tempered by respect. He seemed to have chosen Virgil as his intellectual master in the art of poetry, aiming in his own practice at some of those qualities which he afterwards critically described in his unique essay on the singer of the "Georgics" and "Æneid." To study the niceties of rhythm, to select words for their colour-values, for their emotional suggestiveness, for their sonority apart from sense, appeared to be the young man's object. Expert scholars and excellent critics of literature, like the late Professor Conington, were carried away by the power of style displayed in so occa-

sional a performance as Mr. Myers' Cambridge ode. Here was a youth who started with a manner of his own. It was not evident that he had much to say. Indeed, a good deal that he did say, could not be comprehended by the vulgar and left the intelligent to wonder whether the poet was not hoaxing them. Still, nobody had any doubt that the manner of saying it was original, impressive, indicative of a strongly marked personality and a conscious theory of literary art.

These qualities he has retained throughout his career as a poet. He might be compared to one born with a certain instrument, a flute of silver, or a fife of gold, to play upon. Through that organ of expression he has breathed strains, now stronger, and now weaker, at one time full, at another thin, according to the degree of his inspiration, according to his growth in passion and experience of life, according to the greater or lesser intensity of his enthusiasm, but always without an appreciable alteration of the vehicle. I think this is a rarity in the development of the poetic nature. And, therefore, I insist upon it. Perhaps Poe, among writers of English verse, might be coupled in this respect with Mr. Myers.

To some ears, this instrument upon which Mr. Myers has played so deftly, may seem too artificial, too metallic. In the first poem which secured his fame, "St. Paul," it was certainly so, I think. There is a disproportion there between the thing said, and the pomp of saying it; an aptitude to wrap up simple propositions in puzzling phrases, which have only sonority of tone and impeccable rhythmic cadence to excuse the poverty or involution of their

sense. Yet how seductive, how really beautiful, is the music of those leaping alliterative stanzas. For instance, a "bard on isles of the Ægean" appears before us, wrestling with his wish to write an ode :—

"He, I suppose, with such a care to carry,
Wandered disconsolate and waited long,
Smiting his breast, wherein the notes would tarry,
Chiding the slumber of the seed of the song :

"Then in the sudden glory of a minute
Airy and excellent the proëm came,
Rending his bosom, for a god was in it,
Waking the seed, for it had burst in flame."

Every word here tells, not merely for the metrical effect, but also because it has true meaning in it, and the rhythm is vitalised with passion, with sympathy for moods assimilated, with grasp upon the actuality of the imagined situation. Art—as in the case of Mr. Swinburne, with whom Mr. Myers has notable affinities—seems, at first sight, to predominate. The technical execution is so cunning that we are tempted to rock ourselves upon the rhythm, to drink in only the sweet wine of words. And yet, when we analyse the verse, all has been well said, and much is well worth saying.

Later on, Mr. Myers adapted this exceptional quality of style to what must, in my opinion, be considered his supreme contribution to English poetic literature. That is, the evocation of a new note, an individual tone, from the old chords of the heroic couplet—Chaucer's, Marlowe's, Dryden's, Pope's, Goldsmith's couplet. For the heroic couplet he actually discovered usages which belong to his

own personality. I need not enlarge upon this point, since the finest of his poems in this metre, "The Implicit Promise of Immortality," is included in this volume. Let any one turn to it, and read :—

" Oh dreadful thought, if all our sires and we
Are but foundations of a race to be,—
Stones which one thrusts in earth, and builds thereon
A white delight, a Parian Parthenon,
And thither, long thereafter, youth and maid
Seek with glad brows the alabaster shade,
And in processions' pomp together bent
Still interchange their sweet words innocent,—
Not caring that those mighty columns rest
Each on the ruin of a human breast,—
That to the shrine the victor's chariot rolls
Across the anguish of ten thousand souls ! "

Let him read these lines, and then say whether a new emotional value, an eager modern neurotism, has not been introduced into the well-worn vehicle of verse. "The Translation of Faith," "The Ballerina's Progress," and "The Passing of Youth" ought also to be studied, if one would understand Mr. Myers' specific handling of the couplet. Nor should he neglect the translations from Virgil in the famous essay.

I have spoken more about style than matter in dealing with the poetry of Mr. Myers. It is by style that he will live; he has not chosen or been able to express a mass of thought in verse; the quantity of his production, too, is curiously less than its quality is remarkable. His energies in the direction of study and speculation have passed into absorbing psychical researches. But, if we seek the leading ideas which animate him as a poet, I

think that we shall find them to be the aspiration after personal immortality and the influence of women in human affairs. In various ways, with magnificent rhetoric, and sometimes with inspired emotion, he has given musical utterance to these two factors of man's spiritual life.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

THE RENEWAL OF YOUTH AND OTHER POEMS.

1882.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

I.—THE IMPLICIT PROMISE OF IMMORTALITY.

“ Or questi che dall' infima lacuna
Dell' universo insin qui ha vedute
Le vite spiritali ad una ad una,
Supplica a te per grazia di virtute
Tanto che possa con gli occhi levarsi
Più alto verso l'ultima salute.”

DANTE, *Par.* xxxiii. 22—28.

FRIEND, and it little matters if with thee
In shadowed vales and night's solemnity
Heart has met heart, and soul with soul has known
A deathless kinship and one hope alone ;—
Or if thy dear voice by mine ears unheard
Has never spoken me one winged word,
Nor mine eyes seen thee, nor my spirit guessed
The answering spirit hidden in thy breast ;—
Known or unknown, seen once and loved for long,
Or only reached by this faint breath of song,
In thine imagined ears I pour again
A faltering message from the man in men,—
Thoughts that are born with summer, but abide
Past summer into sad Allhallowtide.

The world without, men say, the needs within,
Which clash and make what we call sorrow and sin,
Tend to adjustment evermore, until
The individual and the cosmic will
Shall coincide, and man content and free
Assume at last his endless empery,
Seeking his Eden and his Heaven no more
By fabled streams behind him or before,

But feeling Pison with Euphrates roll
Round the great garden of his kingly soul.

I answer that, so far, the type that springs
Seems like a race of strangers, not of kings
Less fit for earth, not more so ; rather say
Grown like the dog who when musicians play
Feels each false note and howls, while yet the true
With doubtful pleasure tremulous thrill him through,
Since man's strange thoughts confuse him, and destroy
With half-guessed raptures his ancestral joy.

Meantime dim wonder on the untravelled way
Holds our best hearts, and palsies all our day ;
One looks on God, and then with eyes struck blind
Brings a confusing rumour to mankind ;
And others listen, and no work can do
Till they have got that God defined anew ;
And in the darkness some have fallen, as fell
To baser gods the folk of Israel,
When with Jehovah's thunders heard too nigh
They wantoned in the shade of Sinai.

Take any of the sons our Age has nursed,
Fed with her food and taught her best and worst ;
Suppose no great disaster ; look not nigh
On hidden hours of his extremity ;
But watch him like the flickering magnet stirred
By each imponderable look and word,
And think how firm a courage every day
He needs to bear him on life's common way,
Since even at the best his spirit moves
Thro' such a tourney of conflicting loves,—
Unwisely sought, untruly called untrue,
Beloved, and hated, and beloved anew ;

Till in the changing whirl of praise and blame
He feels himself the same and not the same,
And often, overworn and overwon,
Knows all a dream and wishes all were done.

I know it, such an one these eyes have seen
About the world with his unworldly mien,
And often idly hopeless, often bent
On some tumultuous deed and vehement,
Because his spirit he can nowise fit
To the world's ways and settled rule of it,
But thro' contented thousands travels on
Like a sad heir in disinherison,
And rarely by great thought or brave emprise
Comes out about his life's perplexities,
Looks thro' the rifted cloudland, and sees clear
Fate at his feet and the high God anear.

Ah let him tarry on those heights, nor dream
Of other founts than that Aonian stream !
Since short and fierce, then hated, drowned, and dim
Shall most men's chosen pleasures come to him,—
Not made for such things, nor for long content
With the poor toys of this imprisonment.
Ay, should he sit one afternoon beguiled
By some such joy as makes the wise a child,
Yet if at twilight to his ears shall come
A distant music thro' the city's hum,
So slight a thing as this will wake again
The incommunicable homeless pain,
Until his soul so yearns to reunite
With her Prime Source, her Master and Delight,
As if some loadstone drew her, and brain and limb
Ached with her struggle to get through to Him.

And is this then delusion ? can it be
That like the rest high heaven is phantasy ?
Can God's implicit promise be but one
Among so many visions all undone ?

Nay, if on earth two souls thro' sundering fate
Can save their sisterhood inviolate,
If dimness and deferment, time and pain,
Have no more lasting power upon those twain
Than stormy thunderclouds which, spent and done,
Leave grateful earth still gazing on the sun,—
If their divine hope gladly can forgo
Such nearness as this wretched flesh can know,
While, spite of all that even themselves may do,
Each by her own truth feels the other true :—
Faithful no less is God, who having won
Our spirits to His endless unison
Betrays not our dependence, nor can break
The oath unuttered which His silence spake.

Oh dreadful thought, if all our sires and we
Are but foundations of a race to be,—
Stones which one thrusts in earth, and builds thereon
A white delight, a Parian Parthenon,
And thither, long thereafter, youth and maid
Seek with glad brows the alabaster shade,
And in processions' pomp together bent
Still interchange their sweet words innocent,—
Not caring that those mighty columns rest
Each on the ruin of a human breast,—
That to the shrine the victor's chariot rolls
Across the anguish of ten thousand souls !

“ Well was it that our fathers suffered thus,”
I hear them say, “ that all might end in us ;

Well was it here and there a bard should feel
Pains premature and hurt that none could heal ;
These were their preludes, thus the race began ;
So hard a matter was the birth of Man."

And yet these too shall pass and fade and flee,
And in their death shall be as vile as we,
Nor much shall profit with their perfect powers
To have lived a so much sweeter life than ours,
When at the last, with all their bliss gone by,
Like us those glorious creatures come to die,
With far worse woe, far more rebellious strife
Those mighty spirits drink the dregs of life.

Nay, by no cumulative changeful years,
For all our bitter harvesting of tears,
Shalt thou tame man, nor in his breast destroy
The longing for his home which deadens joy ;
He cannot mate here, and his cage controls
Safe bodies, separate and sterile souls ;
And wouldst thou bless the captives, thou must show
The wild green woods which they again shall know.

Therefore have we, while night serenely fell,
Imparadised in sunset's ænomel,
Beheld the empyrean, star on star
Perfecting solemn change and secular,
Each with slow roll and pauseless period
Writing the solitary thoughts of God.
Not blindly in such moments, not in vain,
The open secret flashes on the brain,
As if one almost guessed it, almost knew
Whence we have sailed and voyage whereunto ;
Not vainly, for albeit that hour goes by,
And the strange letters perish from the sky,

Yet learn we that a life to us is given
One with the cosmic spectacles of heaven,—
Feel the still soul, for all her questionings,
Parcel and part of sempiternal things ;
For us, for all, one overarching dome,
One law the order, and one God the home.

Ah, but who knows in what thin form and strange,
Through what appalled perplexities of change,
Wakes the sad soul, which having once forgone
This earth familiar and her friends thereon
In interstellar void becomes a chill
Outlying fragment of the Master Will ;
So severed, so forgetting, shall not she
Lament, immortal, immortality ?

If thou wouldst have high God thy soul assure
That she herself shall as herself endure,
Shall in no alien semblance, thine and wise,
Fulfil her and be young in Paradise,
One way I know ; forget, forswear, disdain
Thine own best hopes, thine utmost loss and gain,
Till when at last thou scarce rememberest now
If on the earth be such a man as thou,
Nor hast one thought of self-surrender,—no,
For self is none remaining to forgo,—
If ever, then shall strong persuasion fall
That in thy giving thou hast gained thine all,
Given the poor present, gained the boundless scope,
And kept thee virgin for the further hope.

This is the hero's temper, and to some
With battle-trumpetings that hour has come,
With guns that thunder and with winds that fall,
With closing fleets and voices augural ;—

For some, methinks, in no less noble wise
Divine prevision kindles in the eyes,
When all base thoughts like frightened harpies flown
In her own beauty leave the soul alone ;
When Love,—not rosy-flushed as he began,
But love, still Love, the prisoned God in man,—
Shows his face glorious, shakes his banner free,
Cries like a captain for Eternity :—
O halcyon air across the storms of youth,
O trust him, he is true, he is one with Truth !
Nay, is he Christ ? I know not ; no man knows
The right name of the heavenly Anterôs, —
But here is God, whatever God may be,
And whomsoe'er we worship, this is He.

Ah, friend, I have not said it : who shall tell
In wavering words the hope unspeakable ?
Which he who once has known will labour long
To set forth sweetly in persuasive song,
Yea, many hours with hopeless art will try
To save the fair thing that it shall not die,
Then after all despairs, and leaves to-day
A hidden meaning in a nameless lay.

II.—TENERIFFE.

ATLANTID islands, phantom-fair,
Throned on the solitary seas,
Immersed in amethystine air,
Haunt of Hesperides !
Farewell ! I leave Madeira thus
Drowned in a sunset glorious,
The Holy Harbour fading far
Beneath a blaze of cinnabar.

What sights had burning eve to show
From Tacoronte's orange-bowers,
From palmy headlands of Ycod,
From Orotava's flowers !
When Palma or Canary lay
Cloud-cinctured in the crimson day,—
Sea, and sea-wrack, and rising higher
Those purple peaks 'twixt cloud and fire.

But oh the cone aloft and clear
Where Atlas in the heavens withdrawn
To hemisphere and hemisphere
Disparts the dark and dawn !
O vaporous waves that roll and press !
Fire-opalescent wilderness !
O pathway by the sunbeams ploughed
Betwixt those pouring walls of cloud !

We watched adown that glade of fire
Celestial Iris floating free ;
We saw the cloudlets keep in choir
Their dances on the sea ;
The scarlet, huge, and quivering sun
Feared his due hour was overrun,—
On us the last he blazed, and hurled
His glory on Columbus' world.

Then ere our eyes the change could tell,
Or feet bewildered turn again,
From Teneriffe the darkness fell
Head-foremost on the main :—
A hundred leagues was seaward thrown
The gloom of Teyde's towering cone,—
Full half the height of heaven's blue
That monstrous shadow overflow.

Then all is twilight ; pile on pile
 The scattered flocks of cloudland close,
 An alabaster wall, erewhile
 Much redder than the rose !—
 Falls like a sleep on souls forspent
 Majestic Night's abandonment ;
 Wakes like a waking life afar
 Hung o'er the sea one eastern star.

O Nature's glory, Nature's youth,
 Perfected sempiternal whole !
 And is the World's in very truth
 An impercipient Soul ?
 Or doth that Spirit, past our ken,
 Live a profounder life than men,
 Awaits our passing days, and thus
 In secret places calls to us ?

O fear not thou, whate'er befall
 Thy transient individual breath ;—
 Behold, thou knowest not at all
 What kind of thing is Death :
 And here indeed might Death be fair,
 If Death be dying into air,—
 If souls evanished mix with thee,
 Illumined Heaven, eternal Sea.

III.—A LETTER FROM NEWPORT.

φαίη κ' ἀθανάτους καὶ ἀγήρω εἶμεναι αἰεὶ
 ὅς τ' ὅτ' ἐπαντιάσει ὅτ' Ἰάονες ἄθροοι εἶεν.

THE crimson leafage fires the lawn,
 The piled hydrangeas blazing glow ;
 How blue the vault of breezy dawn
 Illumes the Atlantic's crested snow !

'Twixt sea and sands how fair to ride
Through whispering airs a starlit way,
And watch those flashing towers divide
Heaven's darkness from the darkling bay !

Ah, friend, how vain their pedant's part,
Their hurrying toils how idly spent,
How have they wronged the gentler heart
Which thrills the awakening continent,
Who have not learnt on this bright shore
What sweetness issues from the strong,
Where flowerless forest, cataract-roar,
Have found a blossom and a song !

Ah, what imperial force of fate
Links our one race in high emprise !
Nor aught henceforth can separate
Those glories mingling as they rise ;
For one in heart, as one in speech,
At last have Child and Mother grown,—
Fair Figures ! honouring each in each
A beauty kindred with her own.

Through English eyes more calmly soft
Looks from grey deeps the appealing charm ;
Reddens on English cheeks more oft
The rose of innocent alarm :—
Our old-world heart more gravely feels,
Has learnt more force, more self-control ;
For us through sterner music peals
The full accord of soul and soul.

But ah, the life, the smile untaught,
The floating presence feathery-fair !
The eyes and aspect that have caught
The brilliance of Columbian air !

No oriole through the forest flits
More sheeny-plumed, more gay and free ;
On no nymph's marble forehead sits
Proudlie a glad virginity.

So once the Egyptian, gravely bold,
Wandered the Ionian folk among.
Heard from their high Letoon rolled
That song the Delian maidens sung ;
Danced in his eyes the dazzling gold,
For with his voice the tears had sprung,—
“They die not, these ! they wax not old,
They are ever-living, ever-young !”

Spread then, great land ! thine arms afar,
Thy golden harvest westward roll ;
Banner with banner, star with star,
Ally the tropics and the pole ;—
There glows no gem than these more bright
From ice to fire, from sea to sea ;
Blossoms no fairer flower to light
Through all thine endless empery.

And thou come hither, friend ! thou too
Their kingdom enter as a boy ;
Fed with their glorious youth renew
Thy dimmed prerogative of joy :—
Come with small question, little thought,
Through thy worn veins what pulse shall flow,
With what regrets, what fancies fraught,
Shall silver-footed summer go :—

If round one fairest face shall meet
Those many dreams of many fair,
And wandering homage seek the feet
Of one sweet queen, and linger there ;

Or if strange winds betwixt be driven,
Unvoyageable oceans foam,
Nor this new earth, this airy heaven,
For thy sad heart can find a home.

IV.—HONOUR.

A MAN and woman together, a man and woman
apart,
In the stress of the soul's worst weather, the anchor-
less ebb of the heart,
They can say to each other no longer, as lovers
were wont to say,
"Death is strong, but Love is stronger ; there is
night and then there is day ;"
Their souls can whisper no more, "There is better
than sleep in the sod,
We await the ineffable shore, and between us two
there is God :"
Nay now without hope or dream must true friend
sever from friend,
With the long years worse than they seem, and
nothingness black at the end :
And the darkness of death is upon her, the light of
his eyes is dim,
But Honour has spoken, Honour, enough for her
and for him.
Oh what shall he do with the vision, when deep in
the night it comes,
With soul and body's division, with tremor of dream-
land drums ;
When his heart is broken and tender, and his whole
soul rises and cries
For the soft waist swaying and slender, the childlike
passionate eyes ?

Or where shall she turn to deliver her life from the
 longing unrest,
When sweet sleep flies with a shiver, and her heart
 is alone in her breast ?
It is hard, it is cruel upon her, her soft eyes glow
 and are dim,
But Honour has spoken, Honour, enough for her
 and for him.

I had guessed not, did I not know, that the spirit of
 man was so strong
To prefer irredeemable woe to the slightest shadow
 of wrong ;
I had guessed not, had I not known, that twain in
 their last emprise,
Full-souled, and awake, and alone, with the whole
 world's love in their eyes,
With no faith in God to appal them, no fear of man
 in their breast,
With nothing but Honour to call them, could yet
 find Honour the best,—
Could stay the stream of the river and turn the tides
 of the sea,
Give back that gift to the giver, thine heart to the
 bosom of thee.

V.—UNSATISFACTORY.

“ HAVE other lovers,—say, my love,—
 Loved thus before to-day ? ”—

“ They may have, yes ! they may, my love ;
 Not long ago they may.”

“ But though they worshipped thee, my love,
 Thy maiden heart was free ? ”—

“ Don't ask too much of me, my love ;
 Don't ask too much of me ! ”

"Yet now 'tis you and I, my love,
Love's wings no more will fly?"—

"If Love could never die, my love,
Our love should never die."

"For shame! and is this so, my love,
And Love and I must go?"—

"Indeed I do not know, my love;
My life, I do not know."

"You will, you must be true, my love,
Nor look and love anew!"—

"I'll see what I can do, my love;
I'll see what I can do."

Edward Dowden.

1843.

EDWARD DOWDEN was born at Cork on the 3rd of May, 1843, and in 1859 he entered Trinity College, Dublin. After a successful undergraduate career he took his B.A. degree with first place in the first class in Logic and Ethics. For two years he was a student of divinity, was elected President of the Philosophical Society, and in 1867 was appointed Professor of English Literature, an appointment which must be regarded as a remarkable testimony to the acquirements and achievements of a young man of twenty-four. Professor Dowden threw himself with special enthusiasm into the study of Shakspeare, and in 1875 he published his great work, "Shakspeare, his Mind and Art," which at once won for him a European reputation and a hearty recognition from Shaksperian scholars on the other side of the Atlantic. This was followed, two years later, by the valuable "Shakspeare Primer," and in 1890 by his fine introduction to the "Henry Irving" edition of Shakspeare's plays and poems. In 1877 appeared his solitary volume of "Poems" and his first contribution to miscellaneous criticism, "Studies in Literature, 1789—1877." More recently he has reprinted, mainly from the *Fortnightly Review*, another collection of critical essays entitled "Transcripts and Studies"; but the most important of his

later works is undoubtedly his sympathetic and charming "Life of Percy Bysshe Shelley," a book characterised by a fulness of knowledge and a sanity of judgment which at once gave it a place among our few standard biographies. In 1888 Professor Dowden became the President of the English Goethe Society, and his contributions to Goethe literature encourage the hope that he may be able to complete the long-projected work in which he proposes to do for the greatest of Germans what he has already done for the greatest of Englishmen. Professor Dowden married early, and after twenty-six years of perfect domestic happiness was called upon to endure the most poignant of all human sorrows. Mrs. Dowden died in the October of 1892, leaving a great blank in the lives not only of her husband and children but of all whose unspeakable privilege it was to sun themselves in the warmth and radiance diffused by her beautiful spirit.

Professor Dowden is known most widely as a subtle and sympathetic critic of literature; but there are those to whom his work in poetry is even more fascinating than his contributions to criticism. With the full culture, the artistic finish, and the command of imaginative expression which are increasingly frequent in contemporary verse, it combines the peculiar distinction that is always rare and yet always present in any adequate utterance of a strongly individualised and graciously opulent nature. Its art is for the most part flawless, but it is valuable mainly as a perfectly transparent vehicle of thought, vision, and aspiration—as an embodiment of some of the profoundest and yet most elusive of human experiences. Whatever be the outward form of

Professor Dowden's poems they are nearly always in essence lyrical or autobiographic, but they have none of the individualistic egoism of ordinary subjective verse. The nature that they interpret has been so finely touched to such fine issues that it interprets not only itself but all other natures which have thrilled in response to the same delicate spiritual impressions; and the elect reader finds in the verse the reticent but sufficing revelation not only of the poet's secrets, but of his own. This is of course specially true of the poems in which the autobiography is most explicit—such for example as the two series of sonnets respectively entitled "Memories of Travel" and "The Inner Life," and the "New Hymns for Solitude," which sound the abysses and scale the summits of the soul's intensest life. Even however in the more objective work, whether it be in form dramatic—as in "The Heroines,"—or descriptive and interpretative—as in the beautiful poem on "The Corn-Crake," which will be found in the following pages—the same effect of intimate converse is achieved, though of necessity more subtly and allusively, by the prevailing tone of thought and emotion, and by the emphasis instinctively laid upon certain congenial aspects of the chosen theme. Whether the poet enters into the mystery of some moment of spiritual revelation, or celebrates the wonder of some transient pulse of light, some sudden glint of colour, or feels the awe of life's strengthening raptures and purifying renunciations, the poetry of Professor Dowden brings to those who have ears to hear not merely the enduring joy of a thing of beauty, but the rarer, intenser delight of high companionship.

In a phrase of happy characterisation Mr. William Watson has spoken of the "frugal note" of Gray. Professor Dowden's is also a frugal note, for, speaking roughly and not *au pied de la lettre*, his entire poetical output is to be found between the covers of the volume of 1877. But whereas the frugality of Gray arose from a literary fastidiousness in the matter of perfection of form, the frugality of the latter poet denotes a deeper moral fastidiousness in the matter of sincerity of substance. There is in his verse nothing that is merely literary, nothing written to order—even to his own order—but everywhere we have a sense of compulsion, of inevitableness; we feel that the singer is not one who finds his song but who is found by it. Poetry of which this can be said has a momentum which is the one thing wanting in much contemporary work that is in many ways winning and admirable. We say sometimes that this or that utterance is too purely personal to make a universal appeal. What we mean, or ought to mean, is that it is not personal enough—that it is a radiation from the circumference of an individual life, not from its centre. The circumference is the separate *ego*, the centre is the common self; and be we Parthians, Medes, or dwellers in Mesopotamia, we understand and respond to the language in which it speaks. It is this language to which we listen in the most characteristic poems of Edward Dowden.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

POEMS.

EDWARD DOWDEN.

I. — ANDROMEDA.

THE HEROINES.

THIS is my joy—that when my soul had wrought
Her single victory over fate and fear,
He came, who was deliverance. At the first,
Though the rough-bearded fellows bruised my wrists
Holding them backwards while they drove the bolts,
And stared around my body, workman-like,
I did not argue or bewail ; but when
The flash and dip of equal oars had passed,
And I was left a thing for sky and sea
To encircle, gaze on, wonder at, not save—
The clear resolve which I had grasped and held,
Slipped as a dew-drop slips from some flower-cup
O'erweighted, and I longed to cry aloud
One sharp, great cry, and scatter the fixed will,
In fond self-pity. Have you watched night-long,
Above a face from which the life recedes,
And seen death set his seal before the dawn ?
You do not shriek and clasp the hands, but just
When morning finds the world once more all good
And ready for wave's leap and swallow's flight,
There comes a drift from undiscovered flowers,
A drone of sailing bee, a dance of light
Among the awakened leaves, a touch, a tang,
A nameless nothing, and the world turns round,

And the full soul runs over, and tears flow,
And it is seen a piteous thing to die.
So fared it there with me ; the ripple ran
Crisp to my feet ; the tufted sea-pink bloomed
From a cleft rock ; I saw the insects drop
From blossom into blossom ; and the wide
Intolerable splendour of the sea,
Calm in a liquid hush of summer morn,
Girdled me, and no cloud relieved the sky.
I had refused to drink the proffered wine
Before they bound me, and my strength was less
Than needful : yet the cry escaped not, yet
My purpose had not fallen abroad in ruin ;
Only the perfect knowledge I had won
Of things which fate decreed deserted me,
The vision I had held of life and death
Was blurred by some vague mist of piteousness,
Nor could I lean upon a steadfast will.
Therefore I closed both eyes resolved to search
Backwards across the abysm and find Death there,
And hold him with my hand, and scan his face
By my own choice, and read his strict intent
On lip and brow,—not hunted to his feet
And cowering slavewise ; “Death,” I whispered,
 “Death,”
Calling him whom I needed : and he came.

Wherefore record the travail of the soul
Through darkness to grey light, the cloudy war,
The austere calm, the bitter victory ?
It seemed that I had mastered fate, and held,
Still with shut eyes, the passion of my heart
Compressed, and cast the election of my will
Into that scale made heavy with the woe

Of all the world, and fair relinquished lives.
Suddenly the broad sea was vibrated,
And the air shaken with confused noise
Not like the steadfast splash and creak of oars,
And higher on my foot the ripple slid.
The monster was abroad beneath the sun.
This therefore was the moment—could my soul
Sustain her trial? And the soul replied
A swift, sure 'Yes': yet must I look forth once,
Confront my anguish, nor drop blindly down
From horror into horror: and I looked—
O thou deliverance, thou bright victory
I saw thee, and was saved! The middle air
Was cleft by thy impatience of revenge,
Thy zeal to render freedom to things bound:
The conquest sitting on thy brow, the joy
Of thy unerring flight became to me
Nowise mere hope, but full enfranchisement.
A sculptor of the isles had carved the deed
Upon a temple's frieze; the maiden chained
Lifts one free arm across her eyes to hide
The terror of the moment, and her head
Sideways averted writhes the slender neck:
While with a careless grace in flying curve,
And glad like Hermes in his aery poise,
Toward the gaping throat a youth extends
The sword held lightly. When to sacrifice
I pass at morn with my tall Sthenelos.
I smile, but do not speak. No! when my gaze
First met him I was saved; because the world
Could hold so brave a creature I was free:
Here one had come with not my father's eyes
Which darkened to the clamour of the crowd,
And gave a grieved assent; not with the eyes

Of anguish-stricken Cassiopeia, dry
And staring as I passed her to the boat.
Was not the beauty of his strength and youth
Warrant for many good things in the world
Which could not be so poor while nourishing him ?
What faithlessness of heart could countervail
The witness of that brow ? What dastard chains ?
Did he not testify of sovereign powers
O'ermatching evil, awful charities
Which save and slay, the terror of clear joy,
Unquenchable intolerance of ill,
Order subduing chaos, beauty pledged
To conquest of all foul deformities ?
And was there need to turn my head aside,
I, who had one sole thing to do, no more,
To watch the deed ? I know the careless grace
My Perseus wears in manage of the steed,
Or shooting the swift disc : not such the mode
Of that victorious moment of descent
When the large tranquil might his soul contains
Was gathered for a swift abolishment
Of proud brute-tyranny. He seemed in air
A shining spear which hisses in its speed
And smites through boss and breast-plate. Did he see
Andromeda, who never glanced at her
But set his face against the evil thing ?
I know not ; yet one truth I may not doubt
How ere the wallowing monster blind and vast
Turned a white belly to the sun, he stood
Beside me with some word of comfort strong
Nourishing the heart like choral harmonies.
O this was then my joy, that I could give
A soul not saved from wretched female fright,
Or anarchy of self-abandoned will,

But one that had achieved deliverance,
And wrought with shaping hands among the stuff
Which fate presented. Had I shrunk from Death?
Might I not therefore unashamed accept—
In a calm wonder of unfaltering joy—
Life, the fair gift he laid before my feet?
Somewhat a partner of his deed I seemed;
His equal? Nay, yet upright at his side
Scarce lower by a head and helmet's height,
Touching my Perseus' shoulder.

He has wrought
Great deeds. Athena loves to honour him;
And I have borne him sons. Look, yonder goes,
Lifting the bow, Elcios, the last-born.

II.—THE CORN-CRAKE.

I.

HERE let the bliss of Summer and her night
Be on my heart as wide and pure as heaven,
Now while o'er earth the tide of young delight
Brims to the full, calm'd by the wizard Seven,
And their high mistress, yon enchanted Moon;
The air is faint yet fresh as primrose buds,
And dim with weft of honey-coloured beams,
A bride-robe for the new-espoused June,
Who lies white-limbed among her flowers, nor dreams,
Such a divine content her being floods.

II.

Awake! awake! the silence hath a voice:
Not thine thou heart of fire palpitating
Until all griefs change countenance and rejoice,
And all joys ache o'er-ripe since thou dost sing,
Not thine this voice of the dry meadow-lands;

Harsh iteration ! note untuneable !

Which shears the breathing quiet with a blade
Of ragged edge ; say, wilt thou ne'er be still,
Crier in June's high progress, whose commands
Upon no heedless drowsèd heart are laid ?

III.

Nay, cease not till thy breast disquieted
Hath won a term of ease : the dewy grass,
Trackless at morn, betrays not thy swift tread,
And through smooth-closing air thy call-notes pass
To faint on yon soft-bosom'd pastoral steep.
Thee, bird, the night accepts, and I through thee
Reach to embalmèd hearts of summers dead,
Feel round my feet old inland meadows deep,
And bow o'er flowers that not a leaf have shed,
Nor once have heard moan of an alien sea.

IV.

Even while I muse thy halting place doth shift,
More distant now, now nearer : I have seen,
When April through her shining hair a-drift
Gleams a farewell and elms are fledg'd with green,
The voiceful wandering envoy of the Spring ;
Thee, never ; though the mower's scythe hath dashed
Thy nest aside, but thou hast sped askant
Viewless ; then, last, we lose thee, and thy wing
Brushes Nilotic maize, and thou dost chant
Haply all night to stony ears of Pasht.

V.

Ah, now an end to thy inveterate tale !
The silence melts from the mid spheres of heaven ;
Enough ! before this peace has time to fail
From out my heart, or yon white cloud has driven
Up the moon's path I turn, and I will rest

This night with summer in my heart. Farewell !
Shut are the wildrose cups, no moth's awirr ;
My room will be moon-silver'd from the west
For one more hour ; thy note shall be a burr
To tease out thought and catch the slumbrous spell.

III.—A CHILD'S NOONDAY SLEEP.

BECAUSE you sleep, my child, with breathing light
As heave of the June sea,
Because your lips' soft petals dewy-bright
Dispart so tenderly ;

Because the slumbrous warmth is on your cheek
Up from the hushed heart sent,
And in this midmost noon when winds are weak
No cloud lies more content ;

Because nor song of bird, nor lamb's keen call
May reach you sunken deep,
Because your lifted arm I thus let fall
Heavy with perfect sleep ;

Because all will is drawn from you, all power,
And Nature through dark roots
Will hold and nourish you for one sweet hour
Amid her flowers and fruits ;

Therefore though tempests gather, and the gale
Through autumn skies will roar,
Though Earth sent up to heaven the ancient wail
Heard by dead Gods of yore ;

Though spectral faiths contend, and for her course
The soul confused must try,
While through the whirl of atoms and of force
Looms an abandoned sky ;

•

Yet, know I, Peace abides, of earth's wild things
Centre, and ruling thence ;
Behold, a spirit folds her budded wings
In confident innocence.

IV.—IN THE CATHEDRAL CLOSE.

I N the Dean's porch a nest of clay
With five small tenants may be seen,
Five solemn faces, each as wise
As if its owner were a Dean ;

Five downy fledglings in a row,
Packed close, as in the antique pew
The school-girls are whose foreheads clear
At the *Venite* shine on you.

Day after day the swallows sit
With scarce a stir, with scarce a sound,
But dreaming and digesting much
They grow thus wise and soft and round.

They watch the Canons come to dine,
And hear the mullion-bars across,
Over the fragrant fruit and wine
Deep talk of rood-screen and reredos.

Her hands with field-flowers drench'd, a child
Leaps past in wind-blown dress and hair,
The swallows turn their heads askew—
Five judges deem that she is fair.

Prelusive touches sound within,
Straightway they recognise the sign,
And, blandly nodding, they approve
The minuet of Rubinstein.

They mark the cousins' schoolboy talk,
(Male birds flown wide from minster bell),
And blink at each broad term of art,
Binominal or bicycle.

Ah ! downy young ones, soft and warm,
Doth such a stillness mask from sight
Such swiftness ? can such peace conceal
Passion and ecstasy of flight ?

Yet somewhere 'mid your Eastern suns,
Under a white Greek architrave
At morn, or when the shaft of fire
Lies large upon the Indian wave,

A sense of something dear gone by
Will stir, strange longings thrill the heart
For a small world embowered and close,
Of which ye some time were a part.

The dew-drench'd flowers, the child's glad eyes
Your joy unhuman shall control,
And in your wings a light and wind
Shall move from the Maestro's soul.

V.—BURDENS.

ARE sorrows hard to bear,—the ruin
Of flowers, the rotting of red fruit,
A love's decease, a life's undoing,
And summer slain, and song-birds mute,
And skies of snow and bitter air ?
These things, you deem, are hard to bear.

But ah, the burden, the delight
Of dreadful joys! Noon opening wide,
Golden and great; the gulfs of night,
Fair deaths, and rent veils cast aside,
Strong soul to strong soul rendered up,
And silence filling like a cup.

VI.—OASIS.

LET them go by—the heats, the doubts, the strife;
I can sit here and care not for them now,
Dreaming beside the glimmering wave of life
Once more—I know not how.

There is a murmur in my heart, I hear
Faint, O so faint, some air I used to sing;
It stirs my sense; and odours dim and dear
The meadow-breezes bring.

Just this way did the quiet twilights fade
Over the fields and happy homes of men,
While one bird sang as now, piercing the shade,
Long since,—I know not when.

VII.—RENUNCIANTS.

SEEMS not our breathing light?
Sound not our voices free?
Bid to Life's festal bright
No gladder guests there be.

Ah stranger, lay aside
Cold prudence! I divine
The secret you would hide,
And you conjecture mine.

You too have temperate eyes,
Have put your heart to school,
Are proved. I recognise
A brother of the rule.

I knew it by your lip,
A something when you smiled,
Which meant 'close scholarship,
A master of the guild.'

Well, and how good is life ;
Good to be born, have breath,
The calms good, and the strife,
Good life, and perfect death.

Come, for the dancers wheel,
Join we the pleasant din
—Comrade, it serves to feel
The sackcloth next the skin.

VIII.—WATERSHED.

NOW on life's crest we breathe the temperate air ;
Turn either way—the parted paths o'erlook ;
Dear ! we shall never bid the Sphinx despair,
Nor read in Sibyl's book.

The blue bends o'er us ; good are night and day ;
Some blissful influence from the Starry Seven
Thrilled us ere youth took wing ; why now essay
A vain assault on Heaven ?

And what great word Life's singing lips pronounce,
And what intends the sealing kiss of Death
It skills us not ; yet we accept, renounce,
And draw this tranquil breath.

Enough, one thing we know ; haply anon
All truths, yet no truth better or more clear
Than that your hand holds my hand ; therefore, on !
The downward pathway, Dear !

SONNETS

EDWARD DOWDEN.

I.—A DISCIPLE.

(THE INNER LIFE.—I.)

MASTER, they argued fast concerning Thee,
Proved what Thou art, denied what Thou art not,
Till brows were on the fret, and eyes grew hot,
And lip and chin were thrust out eagerly ;
Then through the temple-door I slipped to free
My soul from secret ache in solitude,
And sought this brook, and by the brookside stood
The world's Light, and the Light and Life of me.
It is enough, O Master, speak no word !
The stream speaks, and the endurance of the sky
Outpasses speech : I seek not to discern
Even what smiles for me Thy lips have stirred ;
Only in Thy hand still let my hand lie,
And let the musing soul within me burn.

II.—SEEKING GOD.

(THE INNER LIFE.)

I SAID " I will find God," and forth I went
To seek Him in the clearness of the sky,
But over me stood unendurably
Only a pitiless, sapphire firmament
Ringing the world,—blank splendour ; yet intent
Still to find God, " I will go seek," said I,
" His way upon the waters," and drew nigh
An ocean marge weed-strewn and foam-besprent ;
And the waves dashed on idle sand and stone,
And very vacant was the long, blue sea ;
But in the evening as I sat alone,
My window open to the vanishing day,
Dear God ! I could not choose but kneel and pray,
And it sufficed that I was found of Thee.

III.—EMMAUSWARD.

(THE INNER LIFE.—IX.)

LORD CHRIST, if Thou art with us and these eyes
Are holden, while we go sadly and say
“We hoped it had been He, and now to-day
Is the third day, and hope within us dies,”
Bear with us, O our Master—Thou art wise
And knowest our foolishness ; we do not pray
“Declare Thyself, since weary grows the way,
And faith’s new burden hard upon us lies ;”
Nay, choose Thy time, but ah ! whoe’er Thou art
Leave us not ; where have we heard any voice
Like Thine ? Our hearts burn in us as we go ;
Stay with us ; break our bread ; so, for our part
Ere darkness falls haply we may rejoice,
Haply when day has been far spent may know.

IV.—DELIVERANCE.

(THE INNER LIFE.—XI.)

IPRAYED to be delivered, O true God,
Not from the foes that compass us about,—
Them I might combat ; not from any doubt
That wrings the soul ; not from Thy bitter rod
Smiting the conscience ; not from plagues abroad,
Nor my strong inward lusts ; nor from the rout
Of worldly men, the scourge, the spit, the flout,
And the whole dolorous way the Master trod.
All these would rouse the life that lurks within,
Would save or slay ; these things might be defied
Or strenuously endured ; yea, pressed by sin
The soul is stung with sudden, visiting gleams ;
Leave these, if Thou but scatter, Lord, I cried,
The counterfeiting shadows and faint dreams.

V.—THE SINGER.

(IN THE GARDEN.)

“THAT was the thrush’s last good-night,” I thought,
And heard the soft descent of summer rain
In the drooped garden leaves; but hush! again
The perfect iterance,—freer than unsought
Odours of violets dim in woodland ways,
Deeper than coiled waters laid a-dream
Below mossed ledges of a shadowy stream
And faultless as blown roses in June days.
Full-throated singer! art thou thus anew,
Voiceful to hear how round thyself alone
The enriched silence drops for our delight,
More soft than snow, more sweet than honey-dew?
Now cease: the last faint western streak is gone,
Stir not the blissful triumph of the night.

VI.—LEONARDO’S “MONNA LISA.”

(IN THE GALLERIES.)

MAKE thyself known, Sibyl, or let despair
Of knowing thee be absolute; I wait
Hour-long and waste a soul. What word of fate
Hides ’twixt the lips which smile and still forbear?
Secret perfection! Mystery too fair!
Tangle the sense no more lest I should hate
The delicate tyranny, the inviolate
Poise of thy folded hands, the fallen hair.
Nay, nay,—I wrong thee with rough words; still be
Serene, victorious, inaccessible;
Still smile but speak not; lightest irony
Lurk ever ’neath thy eyelids’ shadow; still
O’ertop our knowledge; Sphinx of Italy
Allure us and reject us at thy will!

Ernest Myers.

1844.

MR. ERNEST MYERS was born at St. John's parsonage, Keswick, October 13th, 1844. He was a younger son of the Rev. Frederic Myers, to whom further reference will be found on p. 61 in the notice of the life and work of Mr. Frederic W. H. Myers, elder brother of the subject of this writing. Mr. Ernest Myers was educated with his brothers at Cheltenham College, whence he proceeded to Oxford as an exhibitioner of Balliol, and became a Fellow of Wadham College. He remained at Oxford as a classical lecturer at Wadham and Balliol till 1871, when he went to reside in London, where he was called to the Bar but never practised. In the spring of 1875 he travelled in Greece and Sicily. In February 1883 he married a daughter of Rev. Canon Lodge, Rector of Scrivelsby, Lincolnshire, and has sons and daughters.

Mr. Ernest Myers' chief published works are "The Puritans," a poem (1869); "Translation of Pindar" (1874); "Poems" (1877); "The Defence of Rome and other poems" (1880); "Translation of the Iliad" (with Mr. Andrew Lang and Mr. W. Leaf) (1883); "The Judgment of Prometheus and Other Poems" (1886), and "The Life of Lord Althorp" (1890). He has also contributed an essay on Æschylus to a volume entitled "Hellenica," by Oxford and

Cambridge writers, in 1880, and made a selection of passages from the prose works of Milton, which was issued with an introduction from his pen in "The Parchment Library."

Mr. Ernest Myers' poetry is characterised by refinement of feeling and elevation of tone. It displays everywhere a cultured taste, and frequently genuine imagination. "The Judgment of Prometheus" contains passages which both in conception and execution reach a very high level, while as a whole it shows that union of accurate knowledge, dramatic insight and command of form which are necessary to what one of his critics has called the "fit psychological treatment of personages and events." His blank verse is stately in movement, and rises with his theme; his lyrics are graceful in form and tender in feeling, while showing, as in the "Ode on the Death of General Gordon," the broader, deeper and higher qualities which characterise his blank verse. In some of the translations we have the facile handling of more sweeping measures, and in "The Defence of Rome" vigorous dramatic presentation. In all we have the work of a poet who is also a scholar.

ALFRED H. MILES.

THE JUDGMENT OF PROMETHEUS.

1886.

ERNEST MYERS.

Strife having arisen between Zeus and Poseidon for the sake of Thetis, daughter of Nereus the sea-god, Prometheus was delivered from bondage on Caucasus and called to declare the award of Fate, known to him alone.

NOW through the royal hall, for Heaven's dread Lord
Wrought by the Fireking's hand, the assembled Gods,
Upon the morn appointed, thronging ranged
Expectant ; mute they moved, and took their thrones,
Gloom on their brows, though Gods ; so dark the dread
Of huge impending battle held their hearts,
Battle of brother Kings, Heaven and the Sea
In duel dire, convulsive war of worlds.

So mused they all, and highest throned the Sire,
Lord of the lightning ; on one side his Queen,
On the other, not less nigh, his chosen child
Pallas, most dear of all his race divine.
Somewhat aloof, yet in the upper hall,
The King Poseidon sate, and round his throne
Ocean, and all great Rivers of the world,
And all Sea-powers, and hoary Nereus nigh,
Nereus the ancient prophet, Thetis' sire.
Full many dooms he knew of days to be,
Yet fate of his own child no whit foresaw
More than the rest, and with the rest must wait
Sore wondering : she in a cool cave the while,
Her maiden chamber, far beneath the foam,

Trembling abode, till Iris flashing down
Should stand on the sea-cliff, and with clear voice
Hail her betrothed, and call her forth to hear
The dread assignment of her destined lord.

Silent the Gods sate all, but now the sound
They caught of coming steps, and from the door
Hermes drew nigh, and at his side a Form
August, of godlike presence, paced the hall.
Like to those heavenly Gods yet diverse he.
Not quite akin he seemed nor alien quite,
Of elder race than they, no seed of Zeus,
Earthborn although divine, and conqueror crowned
From wrestling long with pain, to other Gods
Rare visitant. On his immortal brow,
Ploughed by strange pangs, anguish unknown in Heaven,
Dwelt weightier thought than theirs, more arduous love.
With one accord the congregated Gods
In sudden homage from their golden thrones
Rose up for reverent greeting, as he came.
Then, as he gained their midst, the Thunderer spake :

“ Hail, wondrous Titan, Earth’s mysterious son,
Prophet Prometheus ! In this hour of need
Welcome thou art returned among the Gods,
Thyself a God : assume thy place, sit there
Acknowledged arbiter : what present doubt
Distracts our race divine thou knowest well
Already, and already know’st no less
The doom revealed that must that doubt dissolve.
Judge then, for all the Powers of Heaven are here
Expectant, and await thy final word.”

He said, and all the assembly, when he ceased,
Murmuring well-pleased assent, had turned their gaze

There where the Titan sate, deep-plunged in thought ;
Yet not for long ; scarce had the murmur sunk
To silence, when his answering voice was heard :

“ Gods, and ye Kings of Heaven and of the Sea,
Who here demand my doom oracular,
That word of Fate ye seek, I bid you hear.
Not unto you, world-ruling Thrones divine,
Hath Fate this bride awarded whom ye woo.
Downward, far downward, bend your search, O Gods,
To once-despisèd earth, where lies a land,
Iolcus named, nigh to Olympus’ foot,
There seek the sea-maid’s lord by Fate assigned—
A man, and born of woman, but his blood
From thy celestial ichor, Sire of Gods,
Nathless derives ; nor yet in earth nor heaven
Beats any heart more valiant or more pure.
He hath been tried and hath sore trial borne
As steel of surest temper, true at need,
Or as that ashen spear from Pelion’s woods,
His weapon huge that none may wield but he,
Peleus, the son of thy son whom erewhile
The daughter of the River, once thy love,
Bare thee on earth : on Peleus falls the lot,
To him this bride is given, but with her bears
A sign inseparable, which to learn
Shall leave ye well content to yield to-day
What might infer far sorer sacrifice.
Thus hath Fate spoken : whoso’er he be
That weds the sea-maid Thetis, unto him,
Or man or God immortal, must she bear
A son that shall be mightier than his sire.
Kings of the sky and sea, mark well this word.
No more let Peleus for his God-wooed bride
Be envied, or if envied, only then

For lowliness that calms the fear of fall.
What hurt have men, brief beings of a day,
If thus their sons succeeding top their power ?
No hurt, but joy, to mark the younger fame
Build up the gathering glory of their race.
But if, coëval in undying prime,
Some mightier son, as needs the mightier must,
On trident or on lightning laid his hand,
With unimagined iteration dire
Rousing wild memories of an elder world,
Ruins and revolutions hidden deep
In Time's dark gulf whereto no eyes revert,
Far other deed were that, far other doom."

He ended, and the assembly all amazed
At that unlooked-for sentence, in great awe
On the two sovran Brethren bent their eyes.
No whit had either moved, but on the Seer
Kept their large gaze majestic, fixed and full.
Then, as one impulse in the twain had stirred,
From both with one accord their high assent
Rolled through the solemn stillness, deep and clear :
"So be it as thou sayest, Voice of Fate."

Therewith in confirmation those great Gods,
Immortal and imperial, bowed their brows.
Heaven stirred at that dread sign, and Earth afar
Thrice rocked responsive, heaving all her seas.

Again the Thunderer spake : "Titan, thy task
Is ended, but not ended be thy stay
Among thy peers, this company of Gods.
Here is thy place prepared, here dwell content,
Our counsellor at need, our new-won friend.
Rest here at ease, and learn the unfolded tale

By all these ages wrought in Heaven and Earth,
And changeful tribes of men, thy chosen care,
Once loved by thee alone ; but now, be sure,
There is no God that hath not linked his name,
Perchance his race, to human hope and fear.
Stay then, for change by change is recompensed,
And new things now wax old, and old are new."

He spake, and all the approving throng divine
With acclamation free applauded loud,
Bidding the Titan welcome and all hail ;
Henceforth, they cried, a counsellor of Heaven,
Interpreter of Fate, and friend of Man.
But when their greeting ceased, and sought reply,
He raised his eyes, and with slow-moving gaze
Looked round on that celestial company.

Then with deep voice and mild he answering said,

"Deem not, O Gods, I lightly prize your call.
Thought of inveterate wrong, no longer now
By hourly instant anguish riveted,
Hath fallen from my soul, and left her free
To sweep on ample circles of her wing
Amid dim visions, slowly growing clear,
Of rolling age on age, her proper realm,
Her proper lore ; yet all I gladly learn :
Either of this new kindlier life of Heaven,
Or of that once-scorned world of suffering men,
Whereto your world is linked for ever now,
Right gladly would I hear, yet not as one
Quite shut from knowledge all these exiled years.
Think ye my Mother dear, deep-murmuring Earth,
Could find no means of message, when I lay
On the bare rock between her breast and Heaven ?—
That starry Heaven that made me know my life
Not unbefriended of celestial Powers,

Though other than Olympian ; year by year,
Through height ineffable of frozen air,
Stooped the keen stars, and graved upon my soul,
In fateful characters of golden fire,
Deep and more deep, their slow-unfolding lore.
And more of what they told I too must tell,
Sometime, not now : enough of things to be
Hath been to-day revealed. But now, O Gods,
Farewell ; I may not tarry for your voice,
Your friendly voice ; but other voices call,
Inaudible to you, but to this heart
Admonitory, o'ermastering, deeply dear.
Yea, my racked being yearns for great repose,
Deep sleep and sweet, almost the sleep of death :
And after that, long time my life must pause
In meditative musing, now no more
Pierced by abrupt assault of arrowy pain.
Not here my place of rest ; far hence I seek,
Beyond or world of Gods or world of men,
The tower of ancient Kronos, where he dwells
Amid the Blessed Isles, his final home,
The habitation of a holy calm.
There evermore the West-winds dewy-winged,
Borne o'er the Ocean-river, lightly breathe ;
And over all that sweet and solemn realm
Broods a mild golden light of mellow beam,
Less bright by far than this celestial splendour,
A low warm light, as of eternal eve.
And there are gathered, or shall gather soon,
All my dear kindred, offspring of the Earth,
The brotherhood Titanic, finding there
Harbour desired, and after sore exile
Rejoining well content their ancient King.
Nor these alone ; for to that saving shore

A race far other surely shall be called,
Of seed far humbler sprung, but by decree
Of dooms august, that doom both God and Man,
Raised to high meed, the spirits of just men
Made here companions of immortal Gods ;
Themselves perchance—grudge not, O seed of Heaven !—
Destined, despite their clay, to conquer death.
There for long years, how long I know not yet,
My lot is fixed with that dear folk to dwell ;
But not for ever ; sometime yet to be
(Thus far I know and tell) I come again,
To counsel, and to do, and to endure.
But whether to this glorious hall of Heaven,
Or whether unto Man's long-suffering brood,
I know not—nay nor even surely know
If this my shape wherein I stand to-day
Be changed at my new coming : on such wise
Wears my great Mother many a form and name,
Yet holds through all her one identity.
Thus may I too. Or if the time shall come
When all the stor'd counsel of my soul
Is spent, and all mine oracles outworn,
There shall not fail a prophet in my place,
Some hand to bear the torch, new wisdom bringing
Wiser than Promethéan ; yet that too
Taught him not only by the all-teacher Time,
But by long toil and travail, hate and love,
Design, and disappointment, and defeat,
And by rapt converse held with Earth, and Stars,
And with deep hidden well-springs of the world.

But now to my much yearned for rest afar
I must begone. Wherefore, for that long way,
I pray ye, deathless Presences of Heaven,

Suffer one moment in your shining halls
The appointed convoy that shall bear me hence.
They wait without, and now are near at hand.
My strength is spent in speaking : Gods, farewell."

He ceased, but with his word they saw descend
Two Shapes benign that with wide-hovering wing,
Noiseless as birds' that through the brooding night
Flit all unheard, and of like feathery form,
Close to the Titan's side came floating down.
Well known the one, and welcome even in Heaven,
For even in Heaven who shall not welcome Sleep ?
But round his brother twin a halo hung,
Wellnigh invisible, a filmy veil,
And his calm lips were paler : through the Gods
A brief scarce-heeded shudder lightly ran
At that mild Presence, for they looked on Death.
Not for dominion came he there that day,
But helpmeet of his brother, bound with him
To welcome succour of the weary God.
So to his side those Forms fraternal drew.
His faint eyes half had closed, his failing head
Sank on the breast of Sleep : together both
Raised him with reverent touch, and spread their plumes
Inaudibly. One beat of those wide wings,
Fraught with their sacred burden, bare them forth ;
And in a moment, lo, the heavenly hall
Held them no more, but far they fled on
Down through the glimmering deep of empty air.

GORDON.

ERNEST MYERS.

I.

ON through the Libyan sand
Rolls ever, mile on mile,
League on long league, cleaving the rainless land,
Fed by no friendly wave, the immemorial Nile.

II.

Down through the cloudless air,
Undimmed, from heaven's sheer height,
Bend their inscrutable gaze, austere and bare,
In long-proceeding pomp, the stars of Libyan night.

III.

Beneath the stars, beside the unpausing flood,
Earth trembles at the wandering lion's roar ;
Trembles again, when in blind thirst of blood
Sweep the wild tribes along the startled shore.

IV.

They sweep and surge and struggle, and are gone :
The mournful desert silence reigns again,
The immemorial River rolleth on,
The ordered stars gaze blank upon the plain.

V.

O awful Presence of the lonely Nile,
O awful Presence of the starry sky,
Lo, in this little while
Unto the mind's true-seeing inward eye
There hath arisen there
Another haunting Presence as sublime,
As great, as sternly fair ;

Yea, rather fairer far
Than stream, or sky, or star,
To live while star shall burn or river roll,
Unmarred by marring Time,
The crown of Being, a heroic soul.

VI.

Beyond the weltering tides of worldly change
He saw the invisible things,
The eternal Forms of Beauty and of Right ;
Wherewith well pleased his spirit wont to range,
Rapt with divine delight,
Richer than empires, royaler than kings.

VII.

Lover of children, lord of fiery fight,
Saviour of empires, servant of the poor,
Not in the sordid scales of earth, unsure,
Depraved, adulterate,
He measured small and great,
But by some righteous balance wrought in heaven,
To his pure hand by Powers empyreal given ;
Therewith, by men unmoved, as God he judged aright.

VIII.

As on the broad sweet-watered river tost
Falls some poor grain of salt,
And melts to naught, nor leaves embittering trace ;
As in the o'er-arching vault
With unrepelled assault
A cloudy climbing vapour, lightly lost,
Vanisheth utterly in the starry space ;
So from our thought, when his enthroned estate
We inly contemplate,
All wrangling phantoms fade, and leave us face to face.

IX.

Dwell in us, sacred spirit, as in thee
Dwelt the eternal Love, the eternal Life,
Nor dwelt in only thee ; not thee alone
We honour reverently,
But in thee all who in some succouring strife,
By day or dark, world-witnessed or unknown,
Crushed by the crowd, or in late harvest hailed,
Warring thy war have triumphed, or have failed.

X.

Nay, but not only there
Broods thy great Presence, o'er the Libyan plain.
It haunts a kindlier clime, a dearer air,
The liberal air of England, thy loved home.
Thou through her sunlit clouds and flying rain
Breathe, and all winds that sweep her island shore—
Rough fields of riven foam,
Where in stern watch her guardian breakers roar.
Ay, throned with all her mighty memories,
Wherefrom her nobler sons their nurture draw,
With all of good or great
For aye incorporate
That rears her race to faith and generous shame,
To high-aspiring awe,
To hate implacable of thick-thronging lies,
To scorn of gold and gauds and clamorous fame ;
With all we guard most dear and most divine,
All records ranked with thine,
Here be thy home, brave soul; thy undecaying shrine.

SONNETS.

ERNEST MYERS.

I.—MILTON.

HE left the upland lawns and serene air
Wherefrom his soul her noble nature drew,
And reared his helm among the unquiet crew
Battling beneath ; the morning radiance rare
Of his young brows amid the tumult there
Grew grim with sulphurous dust and sanguine dew ;
Yet through all soilure they who marked him knew
The signs of his life's dayspring, calm and fair,
But when peace came, peace fouler far than war,
And mirth more dissonant than battle's tone,
He, with a scornful sigh of his clear soul,
Back to his mountain clomb, now bleak and frore,
And with the awful Night he dwelt alone,
In darkness, listening to the thunder's roll.

II.—ACHILLES.

ATHWART the sunrise of our western day
The form of great Achilles, high and clear,
Stands forth in arms, wielding the Pelian spear.
The sanguine tides of that immortal fray,
Swept on by Gods, around him surge and sway,
Wherethrough the helms of many a warrior peer,
Strong men and swift, their tossing plumes uprear.
But stronger, swifter, goodlier he than they,
More awful, more divine. Yet mark anigh ;
Some fiery pang hath rent his soul within,
Some hovering shade his brows encompasseth.
What gifts hath Fate for all his chivalry ?
Even such as hearts heroic oftenest win ;
Honour, a friend, anguish, untimely death.

Robert Bridges.

1844.

ROBERT BRIDGES was born in 1844, the son of John Bridges, of St. Nicholas and Walmer in Kent. He was educated at Eton and Corpus Christi College, Oxford, of which College a kinsman of his, the Rev. Thomas Edward Bridges, D.D., was President from 1823—1843. At Oxford he pursued the usual classical course, and was placed in the second class in the Final School of Literæ Humaniores in 1867. It may also be mentioned that he excelled at school and college as a cricketer and oarsman. After graduating in Arts he spent some years in travelling on the Continent and in the East. Returning to London he gave himself to the study of medicine at St. Bartholomew's Hospital, and proceeded to the degree of M.B. at Oxford. He held several hospital appointments, being on the staff at St. Bartholomew's and at the Children's Hospital in Great Ormonde Street, and also practised generally. In 1882 he retired from practice, and left London for the country, settling at Yattendon in Berkshire where he married and still has his home.

Before speaking of his poems, a bibliographical note is necessary as to the somewhat unusual manner in which many of them have been issued. Not a few of Mr. Bridges' best poems have so far not been published in the ordinary way, but have

been most charmingly and tastefully printed by his friend Mr. Daniel, of Worcester College, at his private press. Notably "The Growth of Love," printed by Mr. Daniel in a beautiful black-letter type, is a delightful work of art, the very form in which in an ideal world a poet might desire to speak to an audience few and fit. Practically, however, the volume is among the rare treasures of the booklover, and its vogue has been enhanced in some directions but limited in others by the semi-public manner of its issue. With this explanation it may be well to add a rough list of Mr. Bridges' poems. He published his first volume in 1873, and in the succeeding years several pamphlets; selections from these made up the collection of "Shorter Poems," published by Messrs. Bell in 1890. In 1877 he published a Latin poem "*Carmen Elegiacum de Nosocomio Sti Bartholomæi Londinensis*" (Bumpus); in 1883 came "Prometheus," printed by Daniel; in 1884 "Poems," printed by Daniel, and "Prometheus" reprinted by Bell; in 1885 "Eros and Psyche" (Bell), and "Nero" (Edward Bumpus); in 1889 "The Feast of Bacchus" (Daniel) (the preface is dated 1885); in 1890 "The Growth of Love" (Daniel), and four plays, "Palicio," "The Return of Ulysses," "The Christian Captives," and "Achilles in Scyros" (Bumpus). In the same year (1890) Messrs. Bell published the volume by which Mr. Bridges is best known to the general public, the collection of "Shorter Poems," which has since gone through several editions. In 1891 came "Eden" (Bell), an oratorio set to music by C. V. Stanford, and performed at Birmingham; and in 1892 a reprint of "Achilles in Scyros" (Bell).

It is also of importance for the understanding of

Mr. Bridges' work to notice that he has just published a prose tractate on "*Milton's Prosody*" (Clarendon Press, 1893), embodying some earlier papers, which is one of the most minute and illuminating contributions ever made to the study of English metric generally, and especially to that of Milton's blank verse.

It will be seen, then, that Mr. Bridges is no mere beginner, no haphazard writer of occasional or fugitive verse, but a careful and practised artist, who comes before us with a considerable bulk and range of poetry. As a metrist, he is among the most subtle of our time, learned even to difficulty. Of blank verse especially, now that we have lost Lord Tennyson, there is no more nice, absolute, or various master living. He is a scholar, both in ancient and modern letters; and, what must never be forgotten in reading his poems, he is a skilled and cultivated musician. His "*Feast of Bacchus*," is a most original attempt to reproduce the artistic colloquialism of Greek comedy, and show "*how once Menander went*"; he acknowledges in his plays and his lyrics debts to Michael Angelo, Boccaccio and Calderon, and we are reminded at times of Heine; he dedicates "*Eros and Psyche*" to the celestial spirit of Henry Purcell, and in the "*Christian Captives*," he introduces the music of Anerio and Allegri.

"A good poet's made as well as born." So writes, in his famous memorial lines, the essentially made poet, Ben Jonson, of the born poet—if ever there was one—Shakespeare. And it is true, even of Shakespeare. But the old and better-known adage is also true in that for poets being born is the great matter. Mr. Bridges is both. He is thoroughly

cultivated, but he is also thoroughly original, as original as any true artist ought to be, or indeed can be. He is not original, that is to say, by dint either of violence or *bizarrierie*. He does not attempt to break with the past, or cut himself off from it. He is content to remain in the direct legitimate classic line. But he has advanced his art. He has rediscovered the forgotten metrical perfection of Milton, and has carried it still further. He is himself a new combination of the eternal elements, a combination happy and rich. He has achieved in consequence a new music of his own. He sings his own song in his own way. To use the famous metaphor, he drinks the wine of poesy in his own glass. He stands in his own strength, and that strength, like the best, is in quietness and confidence. He is quiet, he is often even plain, but *simplex munditiis*, "plain in his neatness," for he is always an artist though often with that art which is of the Greek rather than the Latin order, that art of man which is in him like the art of the bird, intuitive, instinctive, which can be learned but cannot be taught, a law to itself, being in natural if conscious harmony with the beauty and fitness of things.

If he has any special analogy with any other poet it is with Milton, with whom indeed his fortune of gifts, education, and circumstance offer many parallels. But it is with the early not with the later Milton, that he suggests comparison, the Milton of Horton Farm and the Italian travels and sonnets, writing in the fresh morning of that afterward so sultry day, before the storm broke, and Cavalier and Puritan were sundered in the storm; the Milton who is still reminiscent of Chaucer and

Spenser and full of the warmth and colour of the English Renaissance ; the Milton of the lines on Shakespeare, and the lines "At a Solemn Music," of "Comus" and "Arcades," and all that dulcet melody so different from the austere and gloomy majesty of "Paradise Lost" or "Samson."

With this youthful, this happy, this Elizabethan moment of Milton, Mr. Bridges has a close affinity. In him grace and gravity have been betrothed and are wedded and have not been divorced. If his muse is something shy and proud, she is by compensation sane and sweet. He is a *pius vates et Phoebæ digna locutus*. He has uttered nothing base, has used no unworthy arts, has put forth no hasty work, has never run after fame, but shunning rather the full stream of the world, has developed his art "*in der Stille*," and quietly finding himself has been ever true to the self he has found.

That self then will be best read in his own words. His lyrics I need not criticise or commend. The tone and temper of our time are favourable to lyric. The "Shorter Poems" have run through several editions. They will find their way. Many have already found it, and are the favourites of many readers. With his sure taste and light touch Mr. Andrew Lang, in his "Letters on Literature" (p. 25), has selected some for special admiration, which are certainly admirable. I regret especially that space forbids me to include the charming Horatian "Invitation to the Country," and the "Reply," in which the "Allegro" and "Penseroso" moods are so delightfully blended, and which better than anything else convey some hint of the poet's manner of life and inspiration. One or two stanzas, however, quoted here, may

give some idea of this. "Far sooner"—he sings in the "Invitation"—

"Far sooner I would choose
The life of brutes that bask,
Than set myself a task,
Which inborn powers refuse :
And rather far enjoy
The body than invent
A duty, to destroy
The ease which nature sent ;

"And country life I praise
And lead because I find
The philosophic mind
Can take no middle ways ;
She will not leave her love
To mix with men, her art
Is all to strive above
The crowd or stand apart."

* * * *

And anon in the "Reply"—

"Then what charm company
Can give know I,—if wine
Go round or throats combine
To set dumb music free,
Or deep in winter-tide,
When winds without make moan,
I love my own fireside
Not least when most alone.

* * * *

"While pleasure yet can be
Pleasant and fancy sweet,
I bid all care retreat
From my philosophy ;
Which, when I come to try
Your simpler life, will find
I doubt not, joys to vie
With those I leave behind."

The keynote of all is to my mind best struck in the

little lyric beginning "I love all beauteous things" (p. 133 of this volume).

Of the other poems some brief notice should be attempted. "Eros and Psyche" is what the Alexandrines called an Epyllion—*i.e.*, a short epic or narrative. It is a delightful piece of art, combining romantic grace and magic with classic contour, in form like some happy effort of English Gothic, symmetrical without being geometric, in colour and pictorial freedom like some mediæval arras, rich but not garish, the art bright and gay, the rhymes fresh and ingenious, the whole so light and dancing that the nice care and secret of the measures are hardly suspected. In this smooth but lofty tale, the *bella fabella* of the tinsel age of Apuleius receives an entirely new dignity, Psyche wears a sweet English girlhood; and the allegory of "True Love and the Soul," which underlies the immemorial story, speaks once more in a worthy and golden note.

"The Growth of Love" is as yet probably but little known, having been so far, as I noted above, only semi-privately published by Mr. Daniel in two very limited editions. Yet, taken as a whole it is, perhaps, Mr. Bridges' most remarkable work, reaching the highest height, the deepest depth in thought and in expression of all his writings. This notable poem is a sequence of sonnets, showing an absolute and free mastery of the sonnet, and reminding at once of Shakespeare and of Spenser. Yet whatever it may recall, it is thoroughly original. In a sense there can be no new philosophy of love. It is as old as, nay older, than Shakespeare and Spenser, Plato and Sophocles, and if Mr. Bridges reminds us of these, it is because his theme and its truths are eternal.

But he has touched it in a new and thrice interesting way, and I cannot doubt that if this fine poem were made accessible it would find many readers, and speak to many grateful hearts.

Mr. Bridges' plays deserve to be, and will be, better known. The subjects and titles are not such as to attract popular attention. Three are Greek, one Roman, one Spanish, one Italian. They do not suggest the modern stage; yet I believe some of them would act exceedingly well.

Mr. Bridges does not, like Mr. Browning, put himself successively inside one after another of his characters, but sits in his box and lets them play before him. Consequently they are essentially dramatic. Such a scene as that from "Palicio" (p. 141) is a series of scenic and dramatic moments and effects, full of gesture, play, light and shade. Acted as it might be, perhaps by a French rather than an English company, it would be extremely telling.

The workmanship in all of the plays is very fine, whether in the longer "tirades" or in the "stichomuthia," or, it is needless to add, in the lyric intermezzos. They have each a vein and character of their own, and taken altogether show a great range of creative fancy and artistic skill. Space has only allowed me to select from three, but a word as to the others may help to show this. "Prometheus," then, is a strict classic revival. It is in the antique manner, statuesque, chiselled, full of noble music. It has, too, a Shelleyan philosophic life and interest, but this is not obvious and is somewhat indirect and secondary. "Nero" is very different; an historic play of passion and character. The delineation of that character which is destiny, of the growth of

the graceful, freakish tiger-cub, into the full-grown man-eater with the thirst for blood, of

“folly’s king,
The hare-brained boy to whom injurious fortune
Has given the throne and grandeur of the world,”

into the murderous, lustful Cæsar, is exceedingly finely drawn out, and the other characters are living and appropriate and proportionate.

In the “Return of Ulysses” Mr. Bridges has achieved what Aristotle 2000 years ago said was a possibility, the conversion of the “Odyssey” into a drama, and gives us an opportunity of testing Aristotle’s statement, that in its condensed form the drama has *pro tanto* an advantage over the epic. It is wonderful how dramatically and well the grand story of the “Odyssey” comes out; and to say this is, perhaps, the best tribute to Mr. Bridges’ skill and insight.

The last of his plays, though not to my thinking in some ways the finest, is, perhaps, the most finished, and the one by which at this moment he can best be judged. “Achilles in Scyros” is certainly pre-eminently characteristic of Mr. Bridges’ genius. The delightful legend of the young Achilles hidden as a maiden among the maidens at the court of King Lycomedes, so capable of being travestied or sophisticated, is here handled with exactly the right touch. Its charm of boy and girl, against the heroic background; its dainty frolic innocence, its fairy tale illusion, blend in a singular and gracious propriety of the whole piece. We have compared Mr. Bridges to the youthful Milton. In “Achilles” the parallel is peculiarly close. It is a Miltonic masque without an antimasque, and no

description or criticism which could now be written could so well fit it as the memorable words of Sir Henry Wotton about "Comus," in his letter to the author, words so apt that I print them in italics :—

"A dainty piece of entertainment, wherein I should much commend the tragical part if the lyrical did not ravish me with a certain Doric delicacy in your songs and odes, whereunto I must plainly confess to have seen nothing yet parallel in our language."

Such, then, is the general nature of the work, from which the following pieces are chosen. Selections are seldom satisfactory, least of all are they so in dealing with a poet whose beauty is not concentrated in purple patches or brilliant epigrams, but diffused through all his writing. However deftly the posy be arranged, it is a posy of cut flowers. At best it can but recall or suggest, it cannot replace a free ramble in the woods of Spring. And Mr. Bridges is a poet of this sort. His charm is subtle and wins gradually on the ear and on the mind. His fragrance is not that of "voluptuous garden roses," but delicate, natural, wilding. His note is unforced. He has little or no rhetoric. His colours are true and tender, not gaudy or hot. His *odi* and *amo* are sincere, but they are tempered by reason and conscience. Healthy, harmonious, happy, born in the golden clime and dowered with the heavenly gifts, and possessed of that indefinable something which kindles verse into poetry, he is a true poet, no living English poet more English or more true.

HERBERT WARREN.

SHORTER POEMS.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

I.—“ *WILL LOVE AGAIN AWAKE?* ”

Muse.

WILL Love again awake,
That lies asleep so long ?

Poet.

O hush ! yc tongues that shake
The drowsy night with song.

Muse.

It is a lady fair
Whom once he deigned to praise
That at the door doth dare
Her sad complaint to raise.

Poet.

She must be fair of face,
As bold of heart she seems,
If she would match her grace
With the delight of dreams.

Muse.

Her beauty would surprise
Gazers on Autumn eves,
Who watched the broad moon rise
Upon the scattered sheaves.

Poet.

O sweet must be the voice
He shall descend to hear,
Who doth in Heaven rejoice
His most enchanted ear.

Muse.

The smile, that rests to play
Upon her lip, foretells
What musical array
Tricks her sweet syllables.

Poet.

And yet her smiles have danced
In vain, if her discourse
Win not the soul entranced
In divine intercourse.

Muse.

She will encounter all
This trial without shame,
Her eyes men Beauty call,
And Wisdom is her name.

Poet.

Throw back the portals then,
Ye guards, your watch that keep,
Love will awake again
That lay so long asleep.

II.—WOOING.

I KNOW not how I came,
New on my knightly journey,
To win the fairest dame
That graced my maiden tourney.

Chivalry's lovely prize
With all men's gaze upon her,
Why did she free her eyes
On me, to do me honour?

Ah ! ne'er had I my mind
With such high hope delighted,
Had she not first inclined,
And with her eyes invited.

But never doubt I knew,
Having their glance to cheer me,
Until the day joy grew
Too great, too sure, too near me.

When hope a fear became,
And passion, grown too tender,
Now trembled at the shame
Of a despised surrender ;

And where my love at first
Saw kindness in her smiling,
I read her pride, and cursed
The arts of her beguiling.

Till winning less than won,
And liker wooed than wooing,
Too late I turned undone
Away from my undoing ;

And stood beside the door,
Whereto she followed, making
My hard leave-taking more
Hard by her sweet leave-taking.

Her speech would have betrayed
Her thought, had mine been colder :
Her eyes distress had made
A lesser lover bolder.

But no ! Fond heart, distrust,
Cried Wisdom, and consider :

Go free, since go thou must,
And so farewell I bid her.

And brisk upon my way
I smote the stroke to sever,
And should have lost that day
My life's delight for ever :

But when I saw her start
And turn aside and tremble ;—
Ah ! she was true, her heart
I knew did not dissemble.

*II.—“ THERE IS A HILL BESIDE THE SILVER
THAMES.”*

THERE is a hill beside the silver Thames,
Shady with birch and beech and odorous pine:
And brilliant underfoot with thousand gems
SteePLY the thickets to his floods decline.
Straight trees in every place
Their thick tops interlace,
And pendant branches trail their foliage fine
Upon his watery face.

Swift from the sweltering pasturage he flows :
His stream, alert to seek the pleasant shade,
Pictures his gentle purpose, as he goes
Straight to the caverned pool his toil has made.

His winter floods lay bare
The stout roots in the air :
His summer streams are cool, when they have played
Among their fibrous hair.

A rushy island guards the sacred bower,
And hides it from the meadow, where in peace
The lazy cows wrench many a scented flower,
Robbing the golden market of the bees :

 And laden barges float
 By banks of myosote ;
And scented flag and golden flower-de-lys
 Delay the loitering boat.

And on this side the island, where the pool
Eddies away, are tangled mass on mass
The water-weeds, that net the fishes cool,
And scarce allow a narrow stream to pass ;
 Where spreading crowfoot mars
 The drowning nenuphars,
Waving the tassels of her silken grass
 Below her silver stars.

But in the purple pool there nothing grows,
Not the white water-lily spoked with gold ;
Though best she loves the hollows, and well knows
On quiet streams her broad shields to unfold :
 Yet should her roots but try
 Within these deeps to lie,
Not her long reaching stalk could ever hold
 Her waxen head so high.

Sometimes an angler comes, and drops his hook
Within its hidden depths, and 'gainst a tree
Leaning his rod, reads in some pleasant book
Forgetting soon his pride of fishery ;
 And dreams, or falls asleep,
 While curious fishes peep
About his nibbled bait, or scornfully
 Dart off and rise and leap.

And sometimes a slow figure 'neath the trees,
In ancient-fashioned smock, with tottering care,
Upon a staff propping his weary knees,
May by the pathway of the forest fare :
 As from a buried day
 Across the mind will stray
Some perishing mute shadow,—and unaware
 He passeth on his way.

Else, he that wishes solitude is safe,
Whether he bathe at morning in the stream :
Or lead his love there when the hot hours chafe
The meadows, busy with a blurring steam ;
 Or watch, as fades the light,
 The gibbous moon grow bright,
Until her magic rays dance in a dream,
 And glorify the night.

Where is this bower beside the silver Thames ?
O pool and flowery thickets, hear my vow !
O trees of freshest foliage and straight stems,
No sharer of my secret I allow :
 Lest ere I come the while
 Strange feet your shades defile ;
Or lest the burly oarsman turn his prow
 Within your guardian isle.

IV.—“*I HAVE LOVED FLOWERS THAT FADE.*”

I HAVE loved flowers that fade,
 Within whose magic tents
Rich hues have marriage made
With sweet unmemoried scents :

A honeymoon delight,—
A joy of love at sight,
That ages in an hour :—
My song be like a flower !

I have loved airs, that die
Before their charm is writ
Along a liquid sky
Trembling to welcome it.
Notes, that with pulse of fire
Proclaim the spirit's desire,
Then die, and are nowhere :—
My song be like an air !

Die, song, die like a breath,
And wither as a bloom :
Fear not a flowery death,
Dread not an airy tomb !
Fly with delight, fly hence !
'Twas thine love's tender sense
To feast ; now on thy bier
Beauty shall shed a tear.

V.—ON A DEAD CHILD.

PERFECT little body, without fault or stain on thee,
With promise of strength and manhood full
and fair !

Though cold and stark and bare,
The bloom and the charm of life doth awhile remain
on thee.

Thy mother's treasure wert thou ;—alas ! no longer
To visit her heart with wondrous joy ; to be
Thy father's pride ;—ah, he
Must gather his faith together, and his strength make
stronger.

To me, as I move thee now in the last duty,
Dost thou with a turn or gesture anon respond ;
Startling my fancy fond
With a chance attitude of the head, a freak of beauty.

Thy hand clasps, as 'twas wont, my finger, and
holds it :
But the grasp is the clasp of Death, heartbreaking
and stiff :
Yet feels to my hand as if
'Twas still thy will, thy pleasure and trust that
enfolds it.

So I lay thee there, thy sunken eyelids closing,—
Go lie thou there in thy coffin, thy last little bed !—
Propping thy wise, sad head,
Thy firm, pale hands across thy chest disposing.

So quiet ! doth the change content thee ?—Death,
whither hath he taken thee ?
To a world, do I think, that rights the disaster of
this ?
The vision of which I miss,
Who weep for the body, and wish but to warm thee
and awaken thee ?

Ah ! little at best can all our hopes avail us
To lift this sorrow, or cheer us, when in the dark,
Unwilling, alone we embark,
And the things we have seen and have known and
have heard of, fail us.

VI.—“*I PRAISE THE TENDER FLOWER.*”

I PRAISE the tender flower,
That on a mournful day
Bloomed in my garden bower
And made the winter gay.
Its loveliness contented
My heart tormented.
I praise the gentle maid
Whose happy voice and smile
To confidence betrayed
My doleful heart awhile :
And gave my spirit deploring
Fresh wings for soaring.
The maid for very fear
Of love I durst not tell :
The rose could never hear,
Though I bespake her well :
So in my song I bind them
For all to find them.

VII.—“*AWAKE, MY HEART, TO BE LOVED.*”

A WAKE, my heart, to be loved, awake, awake !
The darkness silvers away, the morn doth break,
It leaps in the sky : unrisen lustres slake
The o’ertaken moon. Awake, O heart, awake !
She too that loveth awaketh and hopes for thee :
Her eyes already have sped the shades that flee,
Already they watch the path thy feet shall take :
Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake !
And if thou tarry from her,—if this could be,—
She cometh herself, O heart, to be loved, to thee ;
For thee would unashamed herself forsake :
Awake to be loved, my heart, awake, awake

Awake the land is scattered with light, and see,
 Uncanopied sleep is flying from field and tree :
 And blossoming boughs of April in laughter shake ;
 Awake, O heart, to be loved, awake, awake !

Lo all things wake and tarry and look for thee :
 She looketh and saith, 'O sun now bring him to me.
 Come more adored, O adored, for his coming's sake,
 And awake my heart to be loved : awake, awake !'

VIII.—"I LOVE MY LADY'S EYES."

I LOVE my lady's eyes
 Above the beauties rare
 She most is wont to prize,
 Above her sunny hair,
 And all that face to face
 Her glass repeats of grace.

For those are still the same
 To her and all that see :
 But oh ! her eyes will flame
 When they do look on me :
 And so above the rest
 I love her eyes the best.

Now say [*Say, O say ! saith the music*]
 Who likes my song ?—

I knew you by your eyes,
 That rest on nothing long,
 And have forgot surprise ;
 And stray [*Stray, O stray ! saith the music*]
 as mine will stray,
 The while my love's away.

IX.—“O YOUTH WHOSE HOPE IS HIGH.”

O YOUTH whose hope is high,
Who dost to Truth aspire,
Whether thou live or die,
O look not back nor tire.

Thou that art bold to fly
Through tempest, flood and fire,
Nor dost not shrink to try
Thy heart in torments dire :

If thou canst Death defy,
If thy Faith is entire,
Press onward, for thine eye
Shall see thy heart's desire.

Beauty and love are nigh,
And with their deathless quire
Soon shall thine eager cry
Be numbered and expire.

X.—“I LOVE ALL BEAUTEIOUS THINGS.”

I LOVE all beauteous things,
I seek and adore them ;
God hath no better praise,
And man in his hasty days
Is honoured for them.

I too will something make
And joy in the making ;
Altho' to-morrow it seem
Like the empty words of a dream
Remembered on waking.

XI.—“*WANTON WITH LONG DELAY.*”

April 1885.

WANTON with long delay the gay spring leaping
cometh ;
The blackthorn starreth now his bough on the eve
of May :
All day in the sweet box-tree the bee for pleasure
hummeth :
The cuckoo sends afloat his note on the air all day.
Now dewy nights again and rain in gentle shower
At root of tree and flower have quenched the winter's
drouth.
On high the hot sun smiles, and banks of cloud up-
tower
In bulging heads that crowd for miles the dazzling
south.

XII.—*MY EYES FOR BEAUTY PINE.*

MY eyes for beauty pine,
My soul for Goddës grace :
No other care nor hope is mine
To heaven I turn my face.

One splendour thence is shed
From all the stars above :
'Tis namèd when God's name is said,
'Tis Love, 'tis heavenly Love.

And every gentle heart,
That burns with true desire,
Is lit from eyes that mirror part
Of that celestial fire.

EROS AND PSYCHE.

1885.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

(Measure VII.)

I.

BESIDE the Hellenic board of Crete's fair isle,
Westward of Drepanon, along a reach
Which massy Cyamum for many a mile
Jutting to sea delivers from the breach
Of North and East,—returning to embay
The favoured shore—an ancient city lay,
Aptera, which is *Wingless* in our speech.

II.

And hence the name ; that here in rocky cove
Thence called Museion, was the contest waged
What day the Sirens with the Muses strove,
By jealous Hera in that war engaged :
Wherein the daughters of Mnemosynè
O'ercame the chauntresses who vexed the sea,
Nor vengeance spared them by their pride enraged.

III.

For those strange creatures, who with women's words
And wiles made ravenous prey of passers-by,
Were throated with the liquid pipe of birds :
Of love they sang ; and none, who sailed anigh
Through the grey hazes of the cyanine sea,
Had wit the whirlpool of that song to flee,
Nor feared the talon hooked and feathered thigh.

IV.

But them the singers of the gods o'ercame,
And plucked them of their plumage, where in fright
They flew to scape their punishment and shame,
Upon two rocks that lie within the bight,
Under the headland, barren and alone ;

Which, being with the scattered feathers strewn,
Were by the folk named Leukæ, which is *White*.

v.

Thereon about this time the snowy gull,
Minion of Aphrodite, being come,
Plumed himself, standing on the sea-wrack dull,
That drifted from the foot of Cyamum ;
And 'twas his thought, that had the goddess learnt
The tale of Psyche loved and Eros burnt,
She ne'er so long had kept aloof and dumb.

vi.

Wherefore that duteous gossip of Love's queen
Devised that he the messenger would be ;
And rising from the rock, he skimmed between
The chasing waves—such grace have none but he ;—
Into the middle deep then down he dived,
And rowing with his glistening wings, arrived
At Aphrodite's bower beneath the sea.

vii.

The eddies from his silver pinions swirled
The crimson, green, and yellow floss, that grew
About the caves, and at his passing curled
Its graceful silk, and gently waved anew :
Till, oaring here and there, the queen he found
Strayed from her haunt unto a sandy ground,
Dappled with eye-rings in the sunlight blue.

viii.

She, as he came upon her from above,
With Hora played ; Hora, her herald fair,
That lays the soft necessity of Love
On maidens' eyelids, and with sweetest care
Marketh the hour, as in all works is fit ;
And happy they in love who time outwit,
Fondly constrained in her season rare.

IX.

But he with garrulous and laughing tongue
Broke up his news ; how Eros, fallen sick,
Lay tossing on his bed, to frenzy stung
By such a burn as did but barely prick :
A little bleb, no bigger than a pease,
Upon his shoulder 'twas, that killed his ease,
Fevered his heart, and made his breathing thick.

X.

"For which disaster hath he not been seen
This many a day at all in any place :
And thou, dear mistress," said he, "hast not been
Thyself amongst us now a dreary space :
And pining mortals suffer from a dearth
Of love ; and for this sadness of the earth
Thy family is darkened with disgrace.

XI.

"Now on the secret paths of dale and wood,
Where lovers walked, lovers are none to find :
And friends, besworn to closest brotherhood,
Forget their faith, and part with words unkind
By latest married folk thy bond is loathed :
And I could tell even of the new-betrothed
That fly o'er seas, and leave their loves behind.

XII.

"Summer is over, but the merry pipe,
That wont to cheer the harvesting, is mute :
And in the vineyards, where the grape is ripe,
No voice is heard of them that take the fruit.
No workman sings at eve nor maidens dance :
All joy is dead, and with the year's advance
The signs of woe increase on man and brute.

XIII.

" 'Tis plain that if thy pleasure longer pause
Thy mighty rule on earth has seen its day :
The race must come to perish, and no cause
But that thou sittest with thy nymphs at play,
While on the Cretan hills thy truant boy
Has with his pretty mistress turned to toy,
And less for pain than love now pines away."

XIV.

" Ha ! Mistress ! " cried she ; " Hath my beardless son
Been hunting for himself his lovely game ?
Some young Orestiad hath his fancy won ?
Some Naiad ? say ; or is a Grace his flame ?
Or maybe Muse, and then 'tis Erato ;
She aye was wanton. Tell, if thou dost know,
Woman or goddess is she ? and her name."

XV.

Then said the snowy gull, " O heavenly queen,
What is my knowledge, who am but a bird ?
Yet is she only mortal, as I ween,
And namèd Psyche, if I rightly heard."—
But Aphrodite's look daunted his cheer,
Screaming he fled away, scared even by fear
To see the wrath his simple tale had stirred.

XVI.

He flashed his pens, and sweeping widely round
Towered to air ; so swift in all his way,
That whence he dived he there again was found
As soon as if he had but dipped for prey ;
And now, or e'er he joined his sacred flock,
Once more he stood upon the Sirens' rock,
And pruned his ruffled quills for fresh display.

THE GROWTH OF LOVE.

1890.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

(VII.)

IN thee my spring of life hath bid the while
A rose unfold beyond the summer's best,
The mystery of joy made manifest
In love's self-answering and awakening smile :
Whereby the lips in silence reconcile
Desire with peace, and pleading in arrest
Of passion, shew the beauty left unguessed
Of Greece to adorn at last the Tuscan style :

When first the wonder conquering faith had kenned
Fancy portrayed, above the strength of oath
Revealed of God or light of poem penned,
The countenance of ancient-plighted troth
'Twixt heaven and earth, that in one moment blend
The hope of one and happiness of both.

(VIII.)

For beauty being the best of all we know
Sums up the unsearchable and secret aims
Of nature, and on joys whose heavenly names
Were never told can form and sense bestow.
And man hath sped his instinct to outgo
Nature in sound and shape, and daily frames
Much for himself to countervail his shames,
Building a tower above the head of woe.

And never was there work for beauty found
Fairer than this, that we should make to cease
The jarring woes that in the world abound.
Nay with his sorrow may his smiles increase
If from man's greater need beauty redound
And claim his tears for homage of his peace.

(XXXVI.)

All earthly beauty hath one cause and proof,
To lead the pilgrim soul to beauty above :
Yet lieth the greater bliss so far aloof
That few there be are weaned from earthly love.

Joy's ladder it is, reaching from home to home,
The best of all the work that all was good :
Whereof 'twas writ the angels aye upclomb,
Down sped, and at the top the Lord God stood.

But I my time abuse, my eyes by day
Centered on thee, by night my heart on fire—
Letting my numbered moments run away—
Nor e'en 'twixt night and day to heaven aspire.

So true it is that what the eye seeth not
But slow is loved and loved is soon forgot.

(XXXVIII.)

The bliss that Adam lost—eating in haste—
He lost not all, for what he had he had :
And still his sons are born as pure and glad
As he when first by God in Eden placed.
But what he took for them—daring to taste—
He won outright, whether for good or bad :
And in his footsteps all must issue sad
Out of their garden, exiled and disgraced.

And therefore knowledge hath two hands: with one
Pressed to her prisoned heart that mourns and yearns
She guards her firstborn joy and shares with none :
But with her busy right she moves and turns
All tangible things, or gazing on the sun
Shades her adventurous eye and ever learns.

PALICIO.

1883.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

MARGARET, ROSSO, AND PALICIO.

(FROM ACT II., SCENE V.)

Palermo : Room in MANUEL'S House. PALICIO sitting.

Enter MARGARET, with Rosso blindfold.

Mar. (to Rosso). You now are in the room. Stand in your place.

While I make ready. (*To PAL.*) Let me wrap this cloth About thy face. Lie ever still, and speak not.

(*To Rosso.*) Your eyes, sir, are at liberty.

Ros. (unbandaging). Coming hither, I thought 'twould make a pretty poem to tell Of one, whose cruel mistress ne'er allowed The meanest favour, till he dreamed one night That he was blind, and she, in pity of him, Led him forth by the hand where he would go, But left him suddenly ; whereat he awoke, And wished no more to see . . .

Mar. Now, sir Apollo, come. Here lies your patient.
Give him your aid, and tell your poem after.

Ros. Well, let us see. Ay, here is all I need.
Set them thus on the table, and here the light,
So. (arranging.) 'Tis the right arm. (*unbinding.*)
Ah ! when was this done ?

Mar. Have you forgot, sir ? questions are forbidden.

Ros. See, thou must hold his arm for me. Press here Thy fingers ; firmly,—so. Thou dost not faint At sight of blood ?

Mar. Nay, nay. And yet I know not.
If there be much, I faint,

Ros. (operating.) I had forgotten
I might not question ;—'tis a surgeon's habit.—
First,—for where all are eager with their tale,—
'Tis only courteous to invite the telling :—
But chiefly—that it stablishes his judgment—
Built on appearances,—and banishes
Conjecture from experience ;—as 'twould now
For me,—should this man say,—'twas yesterday
The wound was made :—and he that dealt it me
Stood on my left,—and thro' my arm outstretched,—
In attitude of striking at another,—
Thrust with—a sword.—Stir not, 'tis nearly done.—
But I withdrew my arm ere he his weapon,—
Loose not thy grasp : loose not !

Mar. Sir, my attention
Was taken by your story. Never speak :
'Twill mar your work.

Ros. 'Tis a small thing. 'Tis done.
Twas an unlucky lunge that lanced thee there.

(*To MAR.*) What thinkest thou of my story ?

Mar. 'Twas but guessing.

Ros. Nay, inference. 'Twere guess to say, the
skill

Which stanch'd the running blood, but could no
more,

Might be thy brother's : that this sunburnt arm,
Fine skin, and youthful fibre, were the body
Of John Palicio.

Pal. (discovering.) I am betrayed !

Ros. Not so :
Then had I held my tongue.

Pal. True.—What's thy name ?

Ros. My name is Rosso. Sling thine arm across :
There must it rest until the wound be healed.

Mar. You have guessed the secret, sir, which we
withheld

In your respect. This is my brother's house ;
This is Palicio. Guard now what you have learned
As closely, I pray, as if we had freely told it.

Ros. Not to thee, lady, though in this and all
I am thy servant ; yet not now to thee
I speak, but to Giovànn Palicio ;
To whom I say he need not ask of me
Promise or oath. The good I am proud to have done
I shall not spoil by blabbing.

Pal. Thank thee, Rosso.

Ros. Noble and brave Palicio, mayst thou prosper.
[*Bandaging his own eyes.*]

Pal. Thank thee, I thank thee, Rosso. So now
my arm

Is mended. By heaven ! this surgery hath a trick
Worth knowing, could one learn it easily.

Ros. (*blindfold*). Come, lady, and lead me forth.

Mar. Why, what is this ?

You know your way : there's nothing now to hide.

Ros. Didst thou not bargain with me to lead me
back ?

Mar. But there's no need.

Ros. Yet will I claim my fee.

Where is thy hand ?

Mar. Sir, you but trifle.

Ros. And thou
Refusest me in a trifle ? Then I will dare (*unban-*
daging).

To raise my terms. If I may kiss thy hand
I'll be content.

Mar. 'Tis I, sir, should kiss yours.
'Tis that hath earned the homage : and I'll be kind.
That hath done well ; and thus I kiss it. (*Kisses*
Rosso's hand.) Now,
Go, go in peace : thou'rt paid. [*Making him go out.*
[*Exit Rosso.*

Pal. (*sitting.*) Why didst thou that ?

Mar. He loves me.

Pal. Wouldst thou be as kind to me,
If I should love thee ?

Mar. But he sends me sonnets.

Pal. I could write sonnets.

Mar. Ah, but his are writ
In pure Sicilian.

Pal. 'Tis my proper tongue.

Mar. I have kept my promise, sir, and now must
leave.

Your wound is healed.

Pal. I fear I scarce can thank thee,
If 'tis thy word to go. Or, if thou stayest
But to cure wounds,—I have another wound
I shewed thee not, which hath a deeper seat :
This hand may cure it.

Mar. Nay, what mean you, sir ?

Pal. Margaret, I love thee. There, thou hast it all.
Thou hast stolen my soul. I thought—my pride, my
hope—

O, I thought wrong—'tis nothing. All I have done,
Or would do, I cast aside : I love thee only.

Mar. Giovanni.

Pal. O, 'tis true, there's nothing noble,
Beautiful, sacred, dear, familiar to me,
I hold now at a straw's worth : body and soul
I am thine, Margaret, I am thine. O, answer me !

Mar. Giovanni, 'tis so strange. 'Tis best I go.

Pal. Thou didst kiss Rosso's hand.

Mar. For love of thee.

Didst thou not guess ?

Pal. O, then, my dearest, kiss me

Now for myself. Can it be true thou lovest me ?

Mar. Alas ! 'tis learned too quickly.

Pal. Can I think it,

Spite of my savage life, my outlawry,

My poverty ?

Mar. O, what are these ?

Pal. Indeed,

My blood is noble.

Mar. These are not the cheeks

Or lures of love. Nay, what is noble blood ?

What were't to be a lion, and to fly

The hunter like a hare ? And if man shew

Less fearless fierce and hungry for the right

Than doth a beast for food, what is his title

To be God's image worth ? That best nobility

Hath no more claim.

Pal. But canst thou share my life ?

Mar. I am restless for it.

Pal. Leave thy rank ? thy wealth ?

Mar. I have lived too long that counterfeit of life

I'll strive like thee : something I'll do, like thee,

To lessen misery. Nay, if man's curse

Hang in necessity, I have the heart

To combat that, and find if in some part

Fate be not vulnerable.

Pal. O joy, my dearest :

I wronged thee ages by a moment's thought

That thou wouldst shrink. . . . Then is our marriage fixed ?

Mar. There's none can hinder it.

Pal.

O, blessed joy !

Yet how can I be sure, love, that thou knowest,
Finding the word so easy, what a mountain
There lies to lift ? Pledging to me and mine
Thy heart this hour, a hundred thousand stings
Will plague thee from this moment, to drive thee back.

Mar. Try me, Giovanni.*Pal.*

Wilt thou aid me, love,

To fly to-night ? By morning I may meet
My men at San Martino : all my schemes
May yet be saved.

Mar.

Ah ! wilt thou go, Giovanni ?

Thou'rt yet too weak.

Pal.

My presence, not my strength,

Is needed.

Mar. Alas ! I fear.*Pal.*

What, Margaret, dost thou fear ?

Mar. Only for thee. Yet go ; I can be with thee
By noon. My brother has a little house
At Monreale, where I am used to stay
When the wish takes me. There I'll go to-morrow,
And thence can visit thee. Thou didst not mean
I should not come ? I shall not hinder thee.

Pal. Nay, nay.*Mar.*

I'll let thee from the house to-night,

And give thee money which will aid thee well.
My brother need know nothing. I can make
The journey thither in an hour, and choose
My time to beg his grace.

Pal.

What do I owe thee !

Freedom, and life, and love,—thy love . . . O, Margaret,
What I shall do will pay thee.

Mar.

I must leave :

For Manuel else will question of my stay.

Pal. My treasure lost so soon !

Mar. I go to save

What we have won. Farewell.

Pal. Say at what hour

I may go hence ; and how.

Mar. At dead of night :

'Tis safest then.

Pal. And wilt thou come thyself ?

Mar. When the church bell with double stroke hath tolled
The death-knell of to-morrow's second hour,
While its last jar yet shelters in the ear,
Listen : and at thy door when thou shalt catch
A small and wakeful noise, such as is made
By the sharp teeth of an unventurous mouse,
Scraping his scanty feast when all is still,
Come forth. Thou'lt meet my hand, and at the gate
I'll give thee what I have. Tied in thy bundle
Will be a letter shewing thee the place
Where thou must send me tidings. Now, farewell.

Pal. Yet not farewell.

Mar. To-night I shall not see thee :
Nor must thou speak. So, till to-morrow's sun
Lasts our farewell.

Pal. Then with to-morrow, Margaret,
My life begins.

Mar. O, 'tis the greater joy
For me than thee.

Pal. Ay, for the giver ever
Hath the best share. And thus I kiss thee, love.
Farewell.

Mar. Be ready.

Pal. Trust me.

Mar. And take thy dagger.
Farewell. [Going.]

THE CHRISTIAN CAPTIVES.

1886.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

THE DEATH OF ALMEH.

(FROM ACT V.)

A garden of the castle of the King of Fez by the sea.

Moonlight. ALMEH entering, followed by ZAPEL.

Za. My lady, I pray come back.
The night is sharp and cold : thou art not clad
To encounter its brisk sting.

Al. Nay, I must breathe.
I fell into a stifling slumber, Zapel ;
And woke affrighted in a sweat of terror.

Za. For heaven's sake, lady, let thy spirit be
soothed :

Thou killest thyself.

Al. Air, air ! that from the thousand frozen founts
Of heaven art rained upon the drowsy earth,
And gathering keenness from the diamond ways
Of faery moonbeams visitest our world
To make renewal of its jaded life.
Breathe, breathe ! 'Tis drunken with the stolen scents
Of sleeping pinks : faint with quick kisses snatched
From roses, that in crowds of softest snow
Dream of the moon upon their blanchèd bowers.
I drink, I drink.

Za. If thou wilt tarry here,
Let me go fetch thy cloak.

Al. Where is my father ?

Za. He is not in the castle.

Al. Where is Sala ?

I must speak with him.

Za. They are both sallied forth
To assault the Christian camp.

Al. O then 'twas true
The noise I heard. They are fighting : 'twas the guns,
The shouts I heard. I thought 'twas in my ears.
—I have had strange visions, Zapel, these last days :
'Twere past belief what I have seen and heard.
I'll tell thee somewhat when I have time—O love,
If thou wouldst be my muse,
I would enchant the sun ;
And steal the silken hues,
Whereof his light is spun :
And from the whispering way
Of the high-arching air
Look with the dawn of day
Upon the countries fair.

Za. See I will fetch thy cloak. [Exit.

Al. This is the reason
Why all's so quiet. Sweet peace, thou dost lie.
Men steal forth silently to kill : they creep,
That they may spring to murder. Who would think,
Gazing on this fair garden, as it lieth
Lulled by the moonlight and the solemn music
Made everlastingly by the grave sea,
That 'twas a hell of villany, a dungeon
Of death to its possessors. Death.—

Za. (re-entering.) Here is thy cloak.

Al. Away ! what dost thou think,
Zapel, of death ? I'll tell thee. Nay, I promise
I've much to tell.—Thou'st heard, when one is dead
An angel comes to him where he lies buried,
And bids him sit upright, and questions him
Of Islam and Mohammed. 'Tis not so.
For in my dream I saw the spirits of men

Stand to be judged : along the extended line
Of their vast crowd in heaven, that like the sea
Swayed in uncertain sheen upon the bounds
Of its immensity, nor yet for that
Trespassed too far upon the airy shores,
I gazed. The unclouded plain, whereon we stood,
Had no distinction from the air above,
Yet lacked not foothold to that host of spirits,
In all things like to men, save for the brightness
Of incorruptible life, which they gave forth.
Wondering at this I saw another marvel :
They were not clothed nor naked, but o'er each
A veil of quality or colour thrown
Showed and distinguished them, with bickering
glance
And gemlike fires, brighter or undiscerned.
As when the sun strikes on a sheet of foam
The whole is radiant, but the myriad globes
Are red or green or blue, with rainbow light
Caught in the gauzy texture of their coats,—
So differed they. Then, as I gazed, and saw
The host before me was of men, and I
In a like crowd of women stood apart,
The judgment, which had tarried in my thought,
Began : from out the opposèd line of men
Hundreds came singly to the open field
To take their sentence. There, as each stepped forth,
An angel met him, and from out our band
Beckoned a woman spirit, in whose joy
Or gloom his fate was written. Nought was spoken,
And they who from our squadron went to judge
Seemed, as the beckoning angel, passionless.
Woman and man, 'twas plain to all that saw
Which way the judgment went : if they were blessed,

A smile of glory from the air around them
Gathered upon their robes, and music sounded
To guide them forward : but to some it happed
That darkness settled on them. As a man
Who hears ill tidings wraps his cloak about him,
For grief, and shrouds his face, not to be seen ;
So these by their own robes were swallowed up,
That thinned to blackness and invisible darkness,
And were no more. Thus, while I wondered much
How two fates could be justly mixed in one,
Behold a man for whom the beckoning angel
Could find no answering woman, and I watched
What sentence his should be ; when I myself
Was 'ware that I was called. A radiant spirit
Waited for me. I saw prince Ferdinand :—
Go tell him that I am here.

Za. I cannot, lady.

Al. The king and Sala are gone forth to fight :
There's none can know. Be not afraid. Obey.

Za. Alas ! alas !

Al. Why dost thou stand and wail ?

Za. Oh, I would serve thee ; alas ! but 'tis too late.

Al. Too late ! how is't too late ? If he were
dead . . .

Za. Lady, bear up, I pray thee : for 'tis sure
Thy dream betrayed the truth.

Al. The truth ! Alas !
Thou dost believe he is dead. Why, folly, think
How could I then be living ? It could not be
That I, a feeble woman, full of faintings
And fears, were more enduring to outlast
The pangs of hunger than is he, a man
Whom hardship hath inured. Nay, while I live
He must be living.

Za. True it is he is dead.

Al. Thou art suborned : thou liest, thou dost.
Confess.

Za. O nay.

Al. Now God have pity, or thou hast lied.
But thou hast lied. Didst thou not say the king
Sent for him forth ? Didst thou not know the cause ?
His brother has returned in force to take him.
Didst thou not see the dungeon door set wide ?
And dar'st lie thus ?

Za. (*aside.*) Alas ! what can I say ?

(*To A.*) Here is a chair : I pray thee sit awhile,
I will go find him if I may.

Al. (*aside.*) She lied.

Now she will fetch him. (*To Za.*) Where's the seat ?

Za. Here, here.

Al. I am dizzy. Lead me to it. Go fetch the
prince.

Za. Be comforted.

Al. Who hath sat here, I say ?

Who hath sat here ?

Za. Prithee be comforted.

Al. If this should be !

Za. Verily we are God's,
And unto Him return.

Al. Thou, thou ! Begone.

Stay, Zapel, here : give me my cloak. I am cold.
Since I must die . . . think not this strange, I pray.
Bring food to me.

Za. Thank God. 'Tis the sea air
Hath quickened thee.

Al. Thinkst thou that vexèd monster
Hath any physic in his briny breath
For grief like mine ?

Za. Lady, have better heart.
Why, thou must live. When once thy tears have
fallen

Thou wilt be comforted.

Al. How should I weep ?
Bid men weep who with their light-hearted sin
Make the world's misery : bid women weep
Who have been untrue to love and hope : but I,
Why should I weep ? Begone : bring me food here.

Za. O that I am glad to do. Thank God for this.
[Exit.

Al. Why did she lie to me ? Had they a plot
To make me think he is dead ? Sala's my friend :
Sala sent word of hope : and if he lives
All may be saved. Nay, if he be not gone,
If yet he is in the castle, I may find him.
I'll give him food : we will steal forth together :
I have marked the way : and by the rocks of the
shore

We may lie hid till we may reach the camp.
Now would I had kept my strength. Had I foreseen
This chance. . . . There's none about. 'Tis not too
late.

[Noise of guns and fighting heard.
I may dare call. Prince Ferdinand ! Good heart,
What noise of battle. Pray God he be not there.
Against my sire now I pray God : I pray
Our men be driven back : yet not too soon.
Ferdinand ! Ferdinand ! Heaven grant there's none
To hear but he : and he will never hear me
Calling so fearfully, so faintly. . . . Alas !
Better to seek him. Since he is not within,
He must be in this garden. He will have sought
Some shelter from the night.—Ah ! the harbour . . .
there . . .

[Goes to harbour.

Why, here. Wake, Ferdinand, wake! Come, 'tis I,
We may escape. Come. Nay, this cannot be.
Ah, God!—not this. Have pity; undo it, revoke;
O let thy hand for once undo.

Thou mightest, O Thou mightest. Ah, how cold.
Oh! oh! he is murdered. Blood, his blood. 'Tis
true.

Dead, and my dream, my fate, my love; 'tis done.
The end. Nay, God, as Thou art God, I trust Thee;
Take me with him. Here in this bower of death
I leave my body,—to this pitiless world
Of hate: and to thy peaceful shores of joy
I arise. O Ferdinand! me thou didst love.
Thou didst kiss, once . . . and these thy lips so
cold

I kiss once more. I have no fear: I come.

[*Dies, falling on FERDINAND's body*

ACHILLES IN SCYROS.

1887.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

I.—DEIDAMIA AND ACHILLES.

The Island of Scyros. In the gardens of the palace.

Enter DEIDAMIA, ACHILLES as PYRRHA, with the chorus of maidens.

Deidamia (without). Follow me, follow. I lead the race. [*Enters.*

Chor. Follow, we follow, we give thee chase. [*Entering.*

Deid. Follow me, follow !

Ch. We come, we come.

Deid. Here is my home ;

I choose this tree : this is the ground
Where we will make our play. Stand all around,
And let us beg the dwellers in this glade
To bear us company. Be not afraid,
(I will begin) sweet birds, whose flowery songs
Sprinkle with joy the budding boughs above,
The airy city where your light folk throngs,
Each with his special exquisite of love,—
Red-throat and white-throat, finch and golden-crest,
Deep-murmuring pigeon, and soft-cooing dove,—
Unto his mate address, that close in nest
Sits on the dun and dappled eggs all day.—
Come red-throat, white-throat, finch and golden-crest,

Let not our merry play drive you away.

Ch. And ye brown squirrels, up the rugged bark
That fly, and leap from bending spray to spray,

And bite the luscious shoots, if I should mark,
Slip not behind the trunks, nor hide away.—
Ye earthy moles, that burrowing in the dark
Your glossy velvet coats so much abuse ;—
Ye watchful dormice, and small skipping shrews,
Stay not from foraging ; dive not from sight.—
Come moles and mice, squirrels and skipping shrews,
Come all come forth, and join in our delight.

Deid. Enough. Now while the Dryads of the hill
Interpret to the creatures our good will,
Listen, and I will tell you a new game
That we can play together.—As hither I came,
I marked that in the hazel copse below,
Where we so oft have hidden and loved to go
To hear the night-bird, or to take unseen
Our noontide walks beneath the tangled screen,
The woodcutter hath been with cruel blade,
And of the tasselled plumes his strewage made :
And now beside the mossy snags close shorn
The covert lies in swathe like autumn corn.
These ere he lop and into bundles bind,
Let us go choose the fairest we may find,
And of their feathered orphan saplings weave
A bowery dome, until the birds believe
We build a nest, and are come here to dwell.
Hie forth, ye Scyrian maids ; do as I tell :
And having built our bower amid the green,
We will choose one among us for a queen,
And be the Amazons, whose maiden clan
By broad Thermodon dwells, apart from man ;
Who rule themselves, from his dominion free,
And do all things he doth, better than he.
First, Amazons, your queen : to choose her now :
Who shall she be ?

Ch. Thyself, thou. Who but thou ?
Deidamia.

Deid. Where then were the play,
If I should still command, and ye obey ?

Ch. Choose thou for all.

Deid. Nor will I name her, lest
Ye say my favour sets one o'er the rest.

Ch. Thy choice is ours.

Deid. If then I gave my voice
For Pyrrha ?

Ch. Pyrrha, Pyrrha is our choice.
Hail, Pyrrha, hail : Queen of the Amazons !

Deid. (to Ach.). To thee I abdicate my place,
and give
My wreath for crown. Long, my queen, mayst thou
live !

Now, fellow-subjects, hie we off at once.

Achilles. Stay, stay ! Is this the privilege of the
throne ?

Am I preferred but to be left alone ?
No guard, no counsellor, no company !
Deidamia, stay !

Deid. Thy word must be
My law, O queen : I will abide. But ye
Forth quickly, as I said ; ye know the place.

Ch. Follow me, follow : I lead the race.
Follow—we follow, we give thee chase.—

Follow me, follow.

We come, we come. [*Exeunt Chor.*]

Ach. I could not bear that thou shouldst strain
thy hands

Dragging those branches up the sunny hill ;
Nor for a thousand honours thou shouldst do me,
Making me here thy queen, would I consent

To lose thy company, even for an hour.
See, while the maids warm in their busy play,
We may enjoy in quiet the sweet air,
And thro' the quivering golden green look up
To the deep sky, and have high thoughts as idle
And bright, as are the small white clouds becalmed
In disappointed voyage to the noon:
There is no better pastime.

Deid. I will sit with thee
In idleness, while idleness can please.

Ach. It is not idleness to steep the soul
In nature's beauty: rather every day
We are idle letting beauteous things go by
Unheld, or scarce perceived. We cannot dream
Too deeply, nor o'erprize the mood of love,
When it comes on us strongly, and the hour
Is ripe for thought.

II.—CHORUS: "THE EARTH LOVETH THE
SPRING."

Chorus.

I.

THE earth loveth the spring,
Nor of her coming despaireth,
Withheld by nightly sting,
Snow, and icy fling,
The snarl of the North:
But nevertheless she prepareth
And setteth in order her nurselings to bring them forth,
The jewels of her delight,
What shall be blue, what yellow or white,
What softest above the rest,
The primrose, that loveth best
Woodland skirts and the copses shorn.

II.

And on the day of relenting she suddenly weareth
Her budding crowns. O then, in the early morn,
 Is any song that compareth
With the gaiety of birds, that thrill the gladdened air
 In inexhaustible chorus
 To awake the sons of the soil
With music more than in brilliant halls sonorous
 (—It cannot compare—)
 Is fed to the ears of kings
 From the reeds and hired strings.
 For love maketh them glad ;
 And if a soul be sad,
 Or a heart oracle dumb,
Here may it taste the promise of joy to come.

III.

For the Earth knoweth the love which made her,
 The omnipotent one desire,
 Which burns at her heart like fire,
 And hath in gladness arrayed her.
 And man with the Maker shareth,
 Him also to rival throughout the lands,
 To make a work with his hands
 And have his children adore it ;
The Creator smileth on him who is wise and dareth
 In understanding with pride :
For God, where'er he hath builded, dwelleth wide,—
 And he careth,—
 To set a task to the smallest atom,
 The law-abiding grains,
 That hearken each and rejoice :
For he guideth the world as a horse with reins ;
 It obeyeth his voice,
And lo ! he hath set a beautiful end before it.

IV.

Whereto it leapeth and striveth continually,
And pitieth nought, nor spareth :
The mother's wail for her children slain,
The stain of disease,
The darts of pain,
The waste of the fruits of trees,
The slaughter of cattle,
Unbrotherly lust, the war
Of hunger, blood, and the yells of battle,
It heedeth no more
Than a carver regardeth the wood that he cutteth
away :
The grained shavings fall at his feet,
But that which his tool hath spared shall stand
For men to praise the work of his hand ;
For he cutteth so far, and there it lay,
And his work is complete.

V.

But I will praise 'mong men the masters of mind
In music and song,
Who follow the love of God to bless their kind :
And I pray they find
A marriage of mirth—
And a life long
With the gaiety of the Earth.

Gerard Hopkins.

1844—1889.

GERARD MANLEY HOPKINS was born at Stratford, in Essex, July 28th, 1844. He was educated at the Cholmondeley School, Highgate, when Richard Watson Dixon was a master there, which was the beginning of a poetic friendship revived in later years; thence he took an exhibition at Balliol College, Oxford, and there a classical first class in 1867, in preparation for which he enjoyed the sympathetic tuition of Walter Pater. In October of the previous year he had been received into the Roman Catholic Church, and he left Oxford, his—

“Towery city, and branchy between towers,”
to be with Cardinal Newman at Birmingham, till, in 1868, he joined the Jesuits.

He never published any poems, but he took a school prize with verses, the loss of which is to be regretted, if their quality may be judged from the verses of the same date given below; and he was known as a poet at Oxford. When he entered on his novitiate in 1868 he burned what he had written, but he subsequently returned to the muse and devoted much attention to poetry. His early verse shows a mastery of Keatsian sweetnesses, but he soon developed a very different style of his own, so full of experiments in rhythm and diction that, were his poems collected into one volume, they would

appear as a unique effort in English literature. Most of his poems are religious, and marked with Catholic theology, and almost all are injured by a natural eccentricity, a love for subtlety and uncommonness, well denoted by the Greek term τὸ περιττόν. And this quality of mind hampered their author throughout life ; for though to a fine intellect and varied accomplishments (he was both a draughtsman and musician) he united humour, great personal charm, and the most attractive virtues of a tender and sympathetic nature,—which won him love wherever he went, and gave him zeal for his work,—yet he was not considered publicly successful in his profession. When sent to Liverpool to do parish work among the Irish, the vice and horrors nearly killed him : and in the several posts, which he held in turn—he was once select preacher in London, and had for a while some trust at Oxford,—he served without distinction. Of this he was himself conscious, and in a sonnet on the words *Justus quidem tu es, Domine*, etc., he says :—

“Thou art indeed just, Lord, if I contend
With thee ; but, sir, so what I plead is just,
Why do sinners’ ways prosper ? and why must
Disappointment all I endeavour end ?
Wert thou my enemy, O thou my friend,
How couldst thou worse, I wonder, than thou dost
Defeat, thwart me ? Oh, the sots and thralls of lust
Do in spare hours more thrive than I that spend,
Sir, life upon thy cause.” . . .

In connection with which may be read the following undated fragment of a hymn.

“Thee, God, I come from, to thee go,
All day long I like fountain flow
From thy hand out, swayed about
Mote-like in thy mighty glow.

What I know of thee I bless,
As acknowledging thy stress
On my being, and as seeing
Something of thy holiness.

Once I turned from thee and hid,
Bound on what thou hadst forbid ;
Sow the wind I would ; I sinned :
I repent of what I did.

Bad I am but yet thy child.
Father, be thou reconciled.
Spare thou me, since I see
With thy might that thou art mild.

I have life left with me still
And thy purpose to fulfil ;
Yes, a debt to pay thee yet :
Help me, sir, and so I will."

At length in 1884, he was elected Fellow of the Royal University of Ireland, and he seems to have entirely satisfied the Society as classical examiner at Dublin. That drudgery, however, and the political dishonesty which he was there forced to witness, so tortured his sensitive spirit that he fell into a melancholy state, vividly pictured in his last sonnets, in one of which his isolation and exile are thus told :—

"To seem the stranger lies my lot, my life
Among strangers. Father and mother dear,
Brothers and sisters are in Christ not near,
And he my peace my parting, sword and strife.

England, whose honour O all my heart woos, wife
To my creating thought, would neither hear
Me were I pleading, plead nor do I, I weary'
Of idle a being but by where wars are rife."

* * * * *

These lines and others written at that time were his dirge; for he was attacked shortly after by the material contagions of the city, and making no effort for life, he died of the fever in his prime, June 8th, 1889.

The octetts above quoted are in his best style, the dated specimens below are from all periods of his writing. The first two of these he would not have wished to be printed, but it is necessary to give them in proof that the unusual and difficult rhythms of his later work were consciously sought after, and elaborated from the common types which he had set aside. Poems so far removed as his came to be from the ordinary simplicity of grammar and metre, had they no other drawback, could never be popular; but they will interest poets; and they may perhaps prove welcome to the critic, for they have this plain fault, that, aiming at an unattainable perfection of language (as if words—each with its twofold value in sense and in sound—could be arranged like so many separate gems to compose a whole expression of thought, in which the force of grammar and the beauty of rhythm absolutely correspond), they not only sacrifice simplicity, but very often, among verses of the rarest beauty, show a neglect of those canons of taste which seem common to all poetry.

Some syllables have been accented in the text, as a guide to the reader, where it seemed that the boldness of the rhythm might otherwise cause him to doubt the intended stress.

ROBERT BRIDGES.

POEMS.

GERARD HOPKINS.

I.—A VISION OF MERMAIDS.

1862.

(SELECTED LINES.)

Soon—as when Summer of his sister Spring
Crushes and tears the rare enjewelling,
And boasting “I have fairer things than these”
Plashes amid the billowy apple-trees
His lusty hands, in gusts of scented wind
Swirling out bloom till all the air is blind
With rosy foam and pelting blossom and mists
Of driving, vermeil-rain ; and, as he lists,
The dainty onyx-coronals deflowers,
A glorious wanton ;—all the wrecks in showers
Crowd down upon a stream, and jostling thick
With bubbles bugle-eyed, struggle and stick
On tangled shoals that bar the brook—a crowd
Of filmy globes and rosy floating cloud :—
So those Mermaidens crowded to my rock.

* * * * *

But most in a half-circle watched the sun ;
And a sweet sadness dwelt on every one ;
I knew not why, but know that sadness dwells
On Mermaids—whether that they ring the knells
Of sea-men whelm'd in chasms of the mid-main,
As poets sing ; or that it is a pain
To know the dusk depths of the ponderous sea,
The miles profound of solid green, and be
With loath'd cold fishes, far from man, or what ;—

I know the sadness but the cause know not.
Then they, thus ranged, gan make full plaintively
A piteous Siren sweetness on the sea,
Withouten instrument, or conch or bell,
Or stretch'd chords tuneable on turtle's shell :
Only with utterance of sweet breath they sung
An antique chaunt and in an unknown tongue.
Now melting upward through the sloping scale
Swell'd the sweet strain to a melodious wail ;
Now ringing clarion-clear to whence it rose
Slumbered at last in one sweet, deep, heart-broken
close.

II.—THE HABIT OF PERFECTION.

1866.

ELECTED Silence, sing to me
And beat upon my whorlèd ear,
Pipe me to pastures still and be
The music that I care to hear.

Shape nothing, lips ; be lovely-dumb :
It is the shut, the curfew sent
From there where all surrenders come
Which only makes you eloquent.

Be shellèd, eyes, with double dark
And find the uncreated light :
This ruck and reel which you remark
Coils, keeps, and teases simple sight.

Palate, the hutch of tasty lust,
Desire not to be rinsed with wine :
The can must be so sweet, the crust
So fresh that come in fasts divine !

Nostrils, your careless breath that spend
Upon the stir and keep of pride,
What relish shall the censers send
Along the sanctuary side!

O feel-of-primrose hands, O feet
That want the yield of plushy sward,
But you shall walk the golden street,
And you unhouse and house the Lord.

And, Poverty, be thou the bride
And now the marriage feast begun,
And lily-coloured clothes provide
Your spouse not laboured-at, nor spun.

III.—THE STARLIGHT NIGHT.

1877.

LOOK at the stars! look, look up at the skies!
O look at all the fire-folk sitting in the air!
The bright bórroughs, the quivering citadels there!
The dim woods quick with diamond wells; the elf-eyes!
The grey lawns cold where quaking gold-dew lies!
Wind-beat white-beam; airy abeles all on flare!
Flake-doves sent floating out at a farmyard scare!—
Ah well! it is a purchase and a prize.

Buy then! Bid then!—What?—Prayer, patience, alms, vows.—
Look, look! a May-mess, like on orchard boughs;
Look! March-bloom, like on mealed-with-yellow sallows.—
These are indeed the barn: within-doors house
The shocks. This piece-bright paling hides the Spouse
Christ, and the mother of Christ and all his hallows.

IV.—SPRING.

1877.

NOTHING is so beautiful as spring—
 When weeds, in wheels, shoot long and lovely and lush :
 Thrush's eggs look little low heavens, and thrush
 Through the echoing timber does so rinse and wring
 The ear, it strikes like lightnings to hear him sing ;
 The glassy pear-tree leaves and blooms, they brush
 The descending blue ; that blue is all in a rush
 With richness ; the racing lambs too have fair their fling.
 What is all this juice and all this joy ?
 A strain of the earth's sweet being in the beginning
 In Eden garden.—Have, get, before it cloy,
 Before it cloud, Christ, lord, and sour with sinning,
 Innocent mind and Mayday in girl and boy,
 Most, O maid's child, thy choice and worthy the winning.

V.—THE CANDLE INDOORS.

1879.

SOME candle clear burns somewhere I come by.
 I muse at how its being puts blissful back
 With yellowy moisture mild night's blear-all black,
 Or to-fro tender trambeams truckle at the eye.
 By that window what task what fingers ply,
 I plod wondering, a-wanting, just for lack
 Of answer the eagerer a-wanting Jessy or Jack
 There God to aggrandise, God to glorify.—
 Come you indoors, come home ; your fading fire
 Mend first and vital candle in close heart's vault :
 You there are master, do your own desire ;
 What hinders ? Are you beam-blind, yet to a fault
 In a neighbour deft-handed ? Are you that liar,
 And cast by conscience out, spendsavour salt ?

VI.—SPRING AND FALL.

TO A YOUNG CHILD.

1880.

MARGARET, are you grieving
Over Goldengrove unleaving ?
Leaves like the things of man you
With your fresh thoughts care for, can you ?
Ah ! as the heart grows older
It will come to such sights colder
By and by, nor spare a sigh
Though world of wanhood leafmeal lie ;
And yet you will weep and know why.

Now no matter, child, the name :
Sorrow's springs are the same.
Nor mouth had, no, nor mind expressed
What heart heard of, ghost guessed :
It is the blight man was born for,
It is Margaret you mourn for.

VII.—INVERSNAID.

1881.

THIS darksome burn, horse-back brown,
His rollrock highroad roaring down,
In coop and in comb the fleece of his foam
Flutes and low to the lake falls home.

A windpuff-bonnet of fawn-froth
Turns and twindles over the broth
Of a pool so pitchblack, fell-frowning,
It rounds and rounds Despair to drowning.

Degged with dew, dappled with dew
Are the groins of the braes that the brook treads thro',
Wiry heathpacks, fitches of fern,
And the beadbony ash that sits over the burn.

What would the world be, once bereft
Of wet and of wildness? Let them be left,
O let them be left, wildness and wet;
Long live the weeds and the wilderness yet.

VIII.—TO —.

1889.

THE fine delight that fathers thought; the strong
Spur, live and lancing like the blowpipe flame,
Breathes once and, quenched faster than it came,
Leaves yet the mind a mother of immortal song.
Nine months she then, nay years, nine years she long
Within her wears, bears, cares and moulds¹ the same:
The widow of an insight lost she lives, with aim
Now known, and hand at work now never wrong.

Sweet fire, the sire of muse, my soul needs this;
I want the one rapture of an inspiration.
O then if in my lagging lines you miss
The roll, the rise, the carol, the creation,
My winter world, that scarcely breathes that bliss
Now, yields you, with some sighs, our explanation.

¹ *Moulds*. This is not the word in the MS. which I have seen.—ED.

Arthur O'Shaughnessy.

1844—1881.

THE incidents of Arthur O'Shaughnessy's life were few. He was born on March 14th, 1844, and in 1861 obtained a subordinate appointment in the Library of the British Museum. In 1863 he was transferred to the Natural History Department, a step which excited vehement remonstrance from naturalists. O'Shaughnessy, however, proceeded to acquire the scientific knowledge in which he was certainly deficient at the time, and before his death had come to be recognised as an authority on the class Reptilia, especially lizards and serpents, creatures always fascinating to persons of poetic temperament. In 1870 his "Epic of Women" won him a distinguished place among the promising poets of the day, a position hardly improved by his "Lays of France" (1872), or his "Music and Moonlight" (1874). In 1873 he married Eleanor, the gifted daughter of Westland Marston, whom he lost in 1879. He died on January 30th, 1881, after a very short illness occasioned by taking cold in severe weather. His posthumous poems were published in the same year under the title of "Songs of a Worker."

O'Shaughnessy is unquestionably a true poet, a born singer, bearing an inexhaustible spring of native melody in his breast, and owing nothing to artifice or mechanism. He would have been

a great as well as a genuine poet if this gift of music had been associated with the gifts of the thinker, or of the observer of mankind, or with a powerful creative imagination. In some instances, chiefly in his first volume, this latter alliance actually exists, and then the poem is an achievement. "The Daughter of Herodias" and "Bisclavaret" are instances; nor would it be easy to equal the finish of "Three Flowers of Modern Greece," or to outdo the gorgeous painting of "Palm Flowers." Where this objective element is absent, and the poem is the mere lyrical expression of a mood, O'Shaughnessy is still frequently most successful. "A Whisper from the Grave" and "The Fountain of Tears" are miracles of melody, and perhaps the pieces in which the poet's inward nature has most clearly expressed itself. Unfortunately he seemed to have not only expressed but exhausted himself, and his subsequent pieces dwell on the same themes with no variety of sentiment, though with no impairment of his faculty of verse. His posthumous poems confirm the impression that his poetical career was virtually closed while he was only beginning what might have been an important career as a critic and translator. Few were so well versed in modern French literature, and he wrote French with the perfection of an accomplished native. He will live in our literature as a remarkable instance of genuine inspiration as regards spontaneous and inimitable verbal music, and no less of the comparative inefficacy of even so choice a gift if unassociated either with creative imagination or deep and sympathetic insight into life.

RICHARD GARNETT.

THE EPIC OF WOMEN AND OTHER
POEMS.

1870.

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.

I.—THREE FLOWERS OF MODERN GREECE.

(I. IANOULA.)

O SISTERS ! fairly have ye to rejoice,
Who of your weakness wed
With lordly might ; yea, now I praise your choice.
As the vine clingeth with fair fingers spread
Over some dark tree-stem,
So on your goodly husbands with no dread
Ye cling, and your fair fingers hold on them.

For godlike stature, and unchanging brow
Broad as the heaven above,
Yea, for fair mighty looks ye chose, I trow ;
And prided you to see, in strivings rough,
Dauntless, their strong arms raised ;
And little loth were ye to give your love
To husbands such as these whom all men praised.

But I, indeed, of many wooers took
None such for boast or stay,
But a pale lover with a sweet sad look :
The smile he wed me with was like some ray
Shining on dust of death ;
And Death stood near him on my wedding day,
And blanched his forehead with a fatal breath.

I loved to feel his weak arm lean on mine,
Yea, and to give him rest,
Bidding his pale and languid face recline

Softly upon my shoulder or my breast,—
Thinking, alas, how sweet
To hold his spirit in my arms so press'd
That even Death's hard omens I might cheat.

I found his drooping hand the warmest place
Here where my warm heart is ;
I said " Dear love, what thoughts are in thy face ?
Has Death as fair a bosom, then, as this ? "
—O sisters, do not start !

His cold lips answered with a fainting kiss,
And his hand struck its death chill to my heart.

II.—BISCLAVARET.

Bisclavaret ad nun en Bretan
Garwall l'apelent li Norman.
Jadis le poët-hum oïr,
E souvent suleit avenir,
Humes plusurs Garwall devindrent
E es boscages meisun tindrent.

MARIE DE FRANCE : *Lais*.

*I*N either mood, to bless or curse
God bringeth forth the breath of man ;
No angel sire, no woman nurse
Shall change the work that God began :

One spirit shall be like a star,
He shall delight to honour one ;
Another spirit he shall mar :
None shall undo what God hath done.

The weaker holier season wanes ;
Night comes with darkness and with sins ;
And, in all forests, hills, and plains,
A keener, fiercer life begins.

And, sitting by the low hearth fires,
I start and shiver fearfully ;
For thoughts all strange and new desires
Of distant things take hold on me ;
And many a feint of touch or sound
Assails me, and my senses leap
As in pursuit of false things found
And lost in some dim path of sleep.
But, momentarily, there seems restored
A triple strength of life and pain ;
I thrill, as though a wine were poured
Upon the pore of every vein :
I burn—as though keen wine were shed
On all the sunken flames of sense—
Yea, till the red flame grows more red,
And all the burning more intense,
And, sloughing weaker lives grown wan
With needs of sleep and weariness,
I quit the hallowed haunts of man
And seek the mighty wilderness.
—Now over intervening waste
Of lowland drear, and barren wold,
I scour, and ne'er assuage my haste,
Inflamed with yearnings manifold ;
Drinking a distant sound that seems
To come around me like a flood ;
While all the track of moonlight gleams
Before me like a streak of blood ;
And bitter stifling scents are past
A-dying on the night behind,
And sudden piercing stings are cast
Against me in the tainted wind.

And lo, afar, the gradual stir,
And rising of the stray wild leaves ;
The swaying pine, and shivering fir,
And windy sound that moans and heaves
In first fits, till with other throes
The whole wild forest lolls about :
And all the fiercer clamour grows,
And all the moan becomes a shout ;
And mountains near and mountains far
Breathe freely : and the mingled roar
Is as of floods beneath some star
Of storms, when shore cries unto shore.
But soon, from every hidden lair
Beyond the forest tracts, in thick
Wild coverts, or in deserts bare,
Behold they come—renewed and quick—
And splendid fearful herds that stray
By midnight, when tempestuous moons
Light them to many a shadowy prey,
And earth beneath the thunder swoons.
—O who at any time hath seen
Sight all so fearful and so fair,
Unstricken at his heart with keen
Whole envy in that hour to share
Their unknown curse and all the strength
Of the wild thirsts and lusts they know,
The sharp joys sating them at length,
The new and greater lusts that grow ?
But who of mortals shall rehearse
How fair and dreadfully they stand,
Each marked with an eternal curse,
Alien from every kin and land ?

—Along the bright and blasted heights
Loudly their cloven footsteps ring !
Full on their fronts the lightning smites,
And falls like some dazed baffled thing.
Now through the mountain clouds they break,
With many a crest high-antlered, reared
Athwart the storm : now they outshake
Fierce locks or manes, glossy and weird,
That sweep with sharp perpetual sound
The arid heights where the snows drift,
And drag the slain pines to the ground,
And all into the whirlwind lift

The heavy sinking slopes of shade
From hidden hills of monstrous girth,
Till new unearthly lights have flayed
The draping darkness from the earth.
Henceforth what hiding-place shall hide
All hallowed spirits that in form
Of mortal stand beneath the wide
And wandering pale eye of the storm ?

The beadsman in his lonely cell
Hath cast one boding timorous look
Toward the heights ; then loud and well,
—Kneeling before the open book—

All night he prayeth in one breath,
Nor spareth now his sins to own :
And through his prayer he shuddereth
To hear how loud the forests groan.

For all abroad the lightnings reign,
And rally, with their lurid spell,
The multitudinous campaign
Of hosts not yet made fast in hell :

And us indeed no common arm
Nor magic of the dark may smite,
But, through all elements of harm,
Across the strange fields of the night—
Enrolled with the whole giant host
Of shadowy, cloud-outstripping things
Whose vengeful spells are uppermost,
And convoyed by unmeasured wings,
We foil the thin dust of fatigue
With bright-shod phantom feet that dare
All pathless places and the league
Of the light shifting soils of air ;
And loud, 'mid fearful echoings,
Our throats, aroused with hell's own thirst,
Outbay the eternal trumpeting ;
The while, all impious and accurst,
Revealed and perfected at length
In whole and dire transfigurement,
With miracle of growing strength
We win upon a keen warm scent.
Before us each cloud fastness breaks ;
And o'er slant inward wastes of light,
And past the moving mirage lakes,
And on within the Lord's own sight—
We hunt the chosen of the Lord ;
And cease not, in wild course elate,
Until we see the flaming sword
And Gabriel before His gate !
O many a fair and noble prey
Falls bitterly beneath our chase ;
And no man till the judgment day,
Hath power to give these burial place ;

But down in many a stricken home
About the world, for these they mourn ;
And seek them yet through Christendom
In all the lands where they were born.
And oft, when Hell's dread prevalence
Is past, and once more to the earth
In chains of narrowed human sense
We turn,—around our place of birth,
We hear the new and piercing wail ;
And, through the haunted day's long glare,
In fearful lassitudes turn pale
With thought of all the curse we bear.
But, for long seasons of the moon,
When the whole giant earth, stretched low,
Seems straightening in a silent swoon
Beneath the close grip of the snow,
We well nigh cheat the hideous spells
That force our souls resistless back,
With langorous torments worse than hell's
To the frail body's fleshly rack :
And with our brotherhood the storms,
Whose mighty revelry unchains
The avalanches, and deforms
The ancient mountains and the plains,—
We hold high orgies of the things,
Strange and accursèd of all flesh,
Whereto the quick sense ever brings
The sharp forbidden thrill afresh.
And far away, among our kin,
Already they account our place
With all the slain ones, and begin
The Masses for our soul's full grace.

III.—PALM FLOWERS.

I N a land of the sun's blessing
Where the passion-flower grows,
My heart keeps all worth possessing ;
And the way there no man knows.

—Unknown wonder of new beauty !
There my Love lives all for me ;
To love me is her whole duty,
Just as I would have it to be.

All the perfumes and perfections
Of that clime have met with grace
In her body, and complexions
Of its flowers are on her face.

All soft tints of flowers most vernal,
Tints that make each other fade :
In her eyes they are eternal,
Set in some mysterious shade.

Full of dreams are the abysses
Of the night beneath her hair ;
But an open dawn of kisses
Is her mouth : O she is fair.

And she has so sweet a fashion
With her languid loving eyes,
That she stirs my soul with passion
And renews my breath with sighs.

Now she twines her hair in tresses
With some long red lustrous vine ;
Now she weaves strange glossy dresses
From the leafy fabrics fine :

And upon her neck there mingle
Corals and quaint serpent charms,
And bright beaded sea-shells jingle
Set in circlets round her arms.
There—in solitudes sweet smelling,
Where the mighty Banyan stands,
I and she have found a dwelling
Shadowed by its giant hands :
All around our banyan bowers
Shine the reddening palm-tree ranks,
And the wild rare forest flowers
Crowded on high purple banks.
Through the long enchanted weather
—Ere the swollen fruits yet fall,
While red love-birds sit together
In thick green, and voices call
From the hidden forest places
And are answered with strange shout
By the folk whose myriad faces
All day long are peeping out
From shy loopholes all above us
In the leafy hollows green,
—While all creatures seem to love us,
And the lofty boughs are seen
Gilded and for ever haunted
By the far ethereal smiles—
Through the long bright time enchanted,
In those solitudes for miles,
I and She—at heart possessing
Rhapsodies of tender thought—
Wander, till our thoughts too pressing
Into new sweet words are wrought.

And at length, with full hearts sinking
Back to silence and the maze
Of immeasurable thinking,
In those inward forest ways,
We recline on mossy couches,
Vanquished by mysterious calms,
All beneath the soothing touches
Of the feather-leaved fan-palms.
Strangely, with a mighty hushing,
Falls the sudden hour of noon;
When the flowers droop with blushing,
And a deep miraculous swoon
Seems subduing the whole forest;
Or some distant joyous rite
Draws away each bright-hued chorist:
Then we yield with long delight
Each to each, our souls deep thirsting;
And no sound at all is nigh
Save from time to time the bursting
Of some fire-fed fruit on high.
Then with sudden overshadowing
Of impenetrable wings
Comes the darkness and the crowding
Mysteries of the unseen things.
O how happy are we lovers
In weak wanderings hand in hand!—
Whom the immense palm forest covers
In that strange enchanted land;
Whom its thousand sights stupendous
Hold in breathless charmed suspense;
Whom its hidden sounds tremendous
And its throbbing hues intense

And the mystery of each glaring
Flower o'erwhelm with wonder dim ;—
We, who see all things preparing
Some Great Spirit's world for him !
Under pomps and splendid glamour
Of the night skies limitless ;
Through the weird and growing clamour
Of the swaying wilderness ;
Through each shock of sound that shivers
The serene palms to their height,
By white rolling tongues of rivers
Launched with foam athwart the night ;
Lost and safe amid such wonders,
We prolong our human bliss ;
Drown the terrors of the thunders
In the rapture of our kiss.
By some moon-haunted savanna,
In thick scented mid-air bowers
Draped about with some liana,
O what passionate nights are ours !
O'er our heads the squadron dances
Of the fire-fly wheel and poise ;
And dim phantoms charm our trances
And link'd dreams prolong our joys—
Till around us creeps the early
Sweet discordance of the dawn,
And the moonlight pales, and pearly
Haloes settle round the morn ;
And from remnants of the hoary
Mists, where now the sunshine glows,
Starts at length in crimson glory
Some bright flock of flamingoes.

O that land where the suns linger
And the passion-flowers grow
Is the land for me the Singer :
There I made me years ago,

Many a golden habitation,
Full of things most fair to see ;
And the fond imagination
Of my heart dwells there with me.

Now, farewell, all shameful sorrow !
Farewell, troublous world of men !
I shall meet you on some morrow,
But forget you quite till then.

IV.—THE FOUNTAIN OF TEARS.

IF you go over desert and mountain,
Far into the country of sorrow,
To-day and to-night and to-morrow,
And maybe for months and for years ;
You shall come, with a heart that is bursting
For trouble and toiling and thirsting,
You shall certainly come to the fountain
At length,—to the Fountain of Tears.

Very peaceful the place is, and solely
For piteous lamenting and sighing,
And those who come living or dying
Alike from their hopes and their fears ;
Full of cypress-like shadows the place is,
And statues that cover their faces :
But out of the gloom springs the holy
And beautiful Fountain of Tears.

And it flows and it flows with a motion
So gentle and lovely and listless,
And murmurs a tune so resistless
To him who hath suffered and hears—
You shall surely—without a word spoken,
Kneel down there and know your heart broken,
And yield to the long curb'd emotion
That day by the Fountain of Tears.

For it grows and it grows, as though leaping
Up higher the more one is thinking ;
And even its tunes go on sinking
More poignantly into the ears :
Yea, so blessèd and good seems that fountain,
Reached after dry desert and mountain,
You shall fall down at length in your weeping
And bathe your sad face in the tears.

Then, alas ! while you lie there a season,
And sob between living and dying,
And give up the land you were trying
To find 'mid your hopes and your fears ;
—O the world shall come up and pass o'er you
Strong men shall not stay to care for you,
Nor wonder indeed for what reason
Your way should seem harder than theirs.

But perhaps, while you lie, never lifting
Your cheek from the wet leaves it presses,
Nor caring to raise your wet tresses
And look how the cold world appears,—
O perhaps the mere silences round you
All things in that place grief hath found you,
Yea, e'en to the clouds o'er you drifting
May soothe you somewhat through your tears.

You may feel, when a falling leaf brushes
Your face, as though some one had kissed you ;
Or think at least some one who missed you
Hath sent you a thought,—if that cheers ;
Or a bird's little song faint and broken,
May pass for a tender word spoken :
—Enough, while around you there rushes
That life-drowning torrent of tears.

And the tears shall flow faster and faster,
Brim over, and baffle resistance,
And roll down bleared roads to each distance
Of past desolation and years ;
Till they cover the place of each sorrow,
And leave you no Past and no morrow :
For what man is able to master
And stem the great Fountain of Tears ?

But the floods of the tears meet and gather ;
The sound of them all grows like thunder :
—O into what bosom, I wonder
Is poured the whole sorrow of years ?
For Eternity only seems keeping
Account of the great human weeping :
May God then, the Maker and Father—
May He find a place for the tears !

V.—BARCAROLLE.

THE stars are dimly seen among the shadows of
the bay,
The lights that win are seen in strife with lights
that die away :

The wave is very still—the rudder loosens in our
hand,
The zephyr will not fill our sail and waft us to the
land ;
O precious is the pause between the winds that
come and go,
And sweet the silence of the shores between the ebb
and flow.

No sound but sound of rest is on the bosom of the
deep,
Soft as the breathing of a breast serenely hushed
with sleep :
Lay by the oar ; there is a voice at least to sing or
sigh—
O what shall be the choice of barcarolle or lullaby ?

Say shall we sing of day or night, fair land or mighty
ocean,
Of any rapturous delight or any dear emotion,
Of any joy that is on Earth or life that is above—
The holy country of our birth, or any song of love ?

One heart in all our life is like the hand of one who
steers
A bark upon an ocean rife with dangers and with
fears ;

The joys, the hopes, like waves or wings, bear up
this life of ours—

Short as a song of all these things that make up all
its hours.

Spread sail ! for it is Hope to-day that like a wind
new-risen

Doth waft us on a golden wing towards a new
horizon,

That is the sun before our sight, the beacon for us
burning,

That is the star in all our night of watching and of
yearning.

Love is this thing that we pursue to-day, to-night,
for ever,

We care not whither, know not who shall be at
length the giver :

For Love,—our life and all our years are cast upon
the waves ;

Our heart is as the hand that steers ; but who is He
that saves ?

We ply with oars, we strive with every sail upon
our mast—

We never tire, never fail—and Love is seen at last.

A low and purple mirage like a coast when day is
breaking—

Sink sail !—for such a dream as Love is lost before
the waking.

MUSIC AND MOONLIGHT.

1874.

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.

I.—I MADE ANOTHER GARDEN.

I MADE another garden, yea,
For my new love ;
I left the dead rose where it lay,
And set the new above.
Why did the summer not begin ?
Why did my heart not haste ?
My old love came and walked therein,
And laid the garden waste.

She entered with her weary smile,
Just as of old ;
She looked around a little while,
And shivered at the cold.
Her passing touch was death to all,
Her passing look a blight ;
She made the white rose-petals fall,
And turned the red rose white.

Her pale robe, clinging to the grass,
Seemed like a snake
That bit the grass and ground, alas !
And a sad trail did make.
She went up slowly to the gate ;
And there, just as of yore,
She turned back at the last to wait
And say farewell once more.

II.—HAS SUMMER COME WITHOUT THE ROSE.

HAS summer come without the rose,
Or left the bird behind ?
Is the blue changed above thee,
O world ? or am I blind ?
Will you change every flower that grows,
Or only change this spot—
Where she who said, I love thee,
Now says, I love thee not ?
The skies seemed true above thee ;
The rose true on the tree ;
The birds seemed true the summer through ;
But all proved false to me :
World ! is there one good thing in you—
Life, love, or death—or what ?
Since lips that sang I love thee
Have said, I love thee not ?
I think the sun's kiss will scarce fall
Into one flower's gold cup :
I think the bird will miss me,
And give the summer up :
O sweet place, desolate in tall
Wild grass, have you forgot
How her lips loved to kiss me,
Now that they kiss me not ?
Be false or fair above me ;
Come back with any face,
Summer !—do I care what you do ?
You cannot change one place—
The grass, the leaves, the earth, the dew,
The grave I make the spot—
Here, where she used to love me,
Here, where she loves me not.

SONGS OF A WORKER.

1881.

ARTHUR O'SHAUGHNESSY.

I.—KEEPING A HEART. (To M—— D——.)

IF one should give me a heart to keep,
With love for the golden key,
The giver might live at ease or sleep;
It should ne'er know pain, be weary, or weep,
The heart watched over by me.

I would keep that heart as a temple fair,
No heathen should look therein;
Its chaste marmoreal beauty rare
I only should know, and to enter there
I must hold myself from sin.

I would keep that heart as a casket hid
Where precious jewels are ranged,
A memory each; as you raise the lid,
You think you love again as you did
Of old, and nothing seems changed.

How I should tremble day after day,
As I touched with the golden key,
Lest aught in that heart were changed, or say
That another had stolen one thought away
And it did not open to me.

But ah, I should know that heart so well,
As a heart so loving and true,
As a heart that I held with a golden spell,
That so long as I changed not I could foretell
That heart would be changeless too.

I would keep that heart as the thought of heaven
To dwell in a life apart,
My good should be done, my gift be given,
In hope of the recompense there; yea, even
My life should be led in that heart.

And so on the eve of some blissful day,
From within we should close the door
On glimmering splendours of love, and stay
In that heart shut up from the world away,
Never to open it more.

II.—A LOVE SYMPHONY.

A LONG the garden ways just now
I heard the flowers speak ;
The white rose told me of your brow,
The red rose of your cheek ;
The lily of your bended head,
The bindweed of your hair :
Each looked its loveliest and said
You were more fair.

I went into the wood anon,
And heard the wild birds sing,
How sweet you were ; they warbled on,
Piped, trilled the self-same thing.
Thrush, blackbird, linnet, without pause,
The burden did repeat,
And still began again because
You were more sweet.

And then I went down to the sea,
And heard it murmuring too,
Part of an ancient mystery,
All made of me and you.
How many a thousand years ago
I loved, and you were sweet—
Longer I could not stay, and so
I fled back to your feet.

Andrew Lang.

1844.

MR. ANDREW LANG was born at Selkirk, on the 31st of March, 1844. He was educated at Edinburgh Academy, St. Andrews University, and Balliol College, Oxford. In 1868 he was elected Fellow of Merton College, Oxford; and in 1888 was appointed Gifford Lecturer on Natural Religion at St. Andrews University.

Mr. Lang's volumes of verse include "Ballads and Lyrics of Old France" (1872), "XXII. Ballades in Blue China" (1880), "Helen of Troy" (1882), "Rhymes à la Mode" (1884), and "Grass of Parnassus" (1888). His principal prose works are "Custom and Myth" (1884), "Myth, Ritual, and Religion" (1887), "A Translation of the Odyssey" in conjunction with Professor Butcher (1879), one of "Theocritus" (1880), one of the "Iliad" in conjunction with Mr. E. Myers and Mr. W. Leaf (1883), "Books and Bookmen" (1886), "Letters to Dead Authors" (1886), "Letters on Literature" (1889), "Old Friends" (1890), "The Gold of Fairnilee" (1888), "Prince Prigio" (1889), "The Life, Letters, and Diaries of Sir Stafford Northcote, first Earl of Iddesleigh" (1890), "Essays in Little" (1891), the popular series of books of fairy tales known as "The Blue Fairy Book," "The Green Fairy Book," etc., "Homer and the Epic" (1893), etc., etc., etc.

In face of such a list—and it is far from complete—it needs some temerity to suggest that Mr. Lang's verse is the product of learned leisure; for it is very difficult to understand where leisure of any kind can have come into his experience. And yet the proportion his verse bears to his prose prevents us from regarding it as the serious business of his life, and gives support to the suggestion that both in point of quantity and quality, it bears the same relation to his severer efforts, as in general life recreation bears to labour. Mr. Lang's own modest estimate of his lyric work favours this view. In his "*Grass of Parnassus, Rhymes Old and New*" (1888) he regathered from his "*Ballads and Lyrics of Old France*" (1872) and other sources such of his verse as he had any care to preserve, with the exception of some of which, he said in his preface, "circumstances over which I have no control have bound up with Ballads and other Toys of that Sort." This "garland," both by the title he chose for it and by the sonnet with which he introduced it, he laid at the very foot of the sacred mountain, and this not with any claim for its intrinsic merits, but in record of old-time happiness and surviving friendships.

To make this clear, Mr. Lang said, in his preface, "I may as well repeat in prose what I have already said in verse: the *Grass of Parnassus*, the pretty autumn flower, grows in the marshes at the foot of the Muses Hill and other hills, not at the top by any means." But the sonnet is the better introduction.

"Pale star that by the lochs of Galloway,
In wet, green places 'twixt the depth and height
Dost keep thine hour while Autumn ebbs away,
When now the moors have doffed the heather bright,

Grass of Parnassus, flower of my delight,
How gladly with the unpermitted bay—
Garlands not mine, and leaves that not decay—
How gladly would I twine thee if I might !

“The bays are out of reach ! But far below
The peaks forbidden of the Muses Hill,
Grass of Parnassus, thy returning snow
Between September and October chill
Doth speak to me of Autumns long ago,
And these kind faces that are with me still.”

And yet Mr. Lang's verse may be said to crystallise the qualities which make his learning popular and his prose famous. There is the same lightness and precision of touch, the same strength of grasp and freedom of movement which, informed by accuracy of knowledge and sincerity of aim, carry us willingly and pleasantly through the discussion of serious subjects in prose, here applied sometimes as seriously to subjects no less severe, as in the poems on classical themes ; at other times, animated by a gay wisdom or a sober mirth, applied to lighter subjects, as in the “Ballades,” even here often suggesting a moral reflection none the less real because inferred rather than expressed ; sometimes again treating of passing events, which do not pass, with a fine sense of the heroic, as in the lines on “The White Pasha,” and in the sonnet on Colonel Burnaby ; at other times, enshrining old associations and dead, unburied loves, as in “*Almæ Matres*,” “The Last Cast,” and other verses, at all times expressing a nervous sincerity which, while claiming to be counted serious, deprecates being taken too seriously.

In the following pages an attempt is made to represent Mr. Lang's verse in its variety, but we

may add here the "Ballade of his Choice of a Sepulchre," which, according to Mr. Stedman, "is Lang's highest mark as a lyrist":—

"Here I'd come when weariest!
 Here the breast
 Of the Windburg's tufted over
 Deep with bracken; here his crest
 Takes the west,
 Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover.
 Silent here are lark and plover;
 In the cover
 Deep below the cushat best
 Loves his mate, and croons above her
 O'er their nest,
 Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover.
 Bring me here, Life's tired-out guest,
 To the blest
 Bed that waits the weary rover,
 Here should failure be confessed;
 Ends my quest,
 Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover!

ENVOY.

Friend, or stranger kind, or lover,
 Ah, fulfil a last behest,
 Let me rest
 Where the wide-winged hawk doth hover!"

In the edition of "Grass of Parnassus," published in 1892, the sub-title was altered from "Rhymes Old and New" to "First and Last Rhymes." This seems to indicate that Mr. Lang has no further intention of following the muses. Of occasional verse we shall, doubtless, have more from time to time, though we are not likely to have more than enough, but of the lighter efforts of his pen we must not expect many; and yet another volume of XXII. Ballades would find a surprised and eager public.

ALFRED H. MILES.

ALMÆ MATRES.

(*St. Andrews 1862—Oxford 1865.*)

*S*T. ANDREWS *by the Northern Sea,*
A haunted town it is to me !

A little city, worn and gray,
The gray North Ocean girds it round,
And o'er the rocks, and up the bay,
The long sea-rollers surge and sound.
And still the thin and biting spray
Drives down the melancholy street,
And still endure, and still decay,
Towers that the salt winds vainly beat.
Ghost-like and shadowy they stand
Clear mirrored in the wet sea-sand.

O, ruined chapel, long ago
We loitered idly where the tall
Fresh-budded mountain-ashes blow
Within thy desecrated wall :
The tough roots broke the tomb below,
The April birds sang clamorous,
We did not dream, we could not know
How soon the Fates would sunder us !

O, broken minster, looking forth
Beyond the bay, above the town,
O, winter of the kindly North,
O, college of the scarlet gown,
And shining sands beside the sea,
And stretch of links beyond the sand,
Once more I watch you, and to me
It is as if I touched his hand !

And therefore art thou yet more dear,
O, little city, gray and sere,
Though shrunken from thine ancient pride,
And lonely by thy lonely sea,
Than these fair halls on Isis' side,
Where Youth an hour came back to me.

A land of waters green and clear,
Of willows and of poplars tall,
And in the Spring-time of the year,
The white may breaking over all,
And Pleasure quick to come at call ;
And summer rides by marsh and wold,
And Autumn with her crimson pall
About the towers of Magdalen rolled :
And strange enchantments from the past,
And memories of the friends of old,
And strong Tradition, binding fast
The flying terms with bands of gold,—
All these hath Oxford : all are dear,
But dearer far the little town,
The drifting surf, the wintry year,
The college of the scarlet gown,
St. Andrews by the Northern Sea,
That is a haunted town to me !

BALLADES.

ANDREW LANG.

I.—BALLADE OF BLUE CHINA.

THERE'S a joy without canker or cark,
There's a pleasure eternally new,
'Tis to gloat on the glaze and the mark
Of China that's ancient and blue ;
Unchipp'd all the centuries through
It has pass'd since the chime of it rang,
And they fashion'd it, figure and hue,
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

These dragons (their tails, you remark,
Into bunches of gillyflowers grew),—
When Noah came out of the ark,
Did these lie in wait for his crew ?
They snorted, they snapp'd, and they slew,
They were mighty of fin and of fang,
And their portraits Celestials drew,
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

Here's a pot with a cot in a park,
In a park where the peach-blossoms blew,
Where the lovers eloped in the dark,
Loved, died, and were changed into two
Bright birds, that eternally flew
Through the boughs of the may as they sang,
'Tis a tale was undoubtedly true
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

ENVOY.

Come, snarl at my ecstasies, do,
Kind critic, your "tongue has a tang,"
But—a sage never heeded a shrew
In the reign of the Emperor Hwang.

II.—BALLADE OF CRICKET.

TO T. W. LANG.

THE burden of hard hitting : slog away !
Here shalt thou make a "five" and there a "four,"
And then upon thy bat shalt lean, and say,
That thou art in for an uncommon score.
Yea, the loud ring applauding thee shall roar,
And thou to rival Thornton shalt aspire,
When lo, the Umpire gives thee "leg before,"—
"This is the end of every man's desire !"

The burden of much bowling, when the stay
Of all thy team is "collared," swift or slower,
When "bailers" break not in their wonted way,
And "yorkers" come not off as heretofore.
When length balls shoot no more, ah never more,
When all deliveries lose their former fire,
When bats seem broader than the broad barn-door,
"This is the end of every man's desire !"

The burden of long fielding, when the clay
Clings to thy shoon in sudden shower's downpour,
And running still thou stumblest, or the ray
Of blazing suns doth bite and burn thee sore,
And blind thee till, forgetful of thy lore,
Thou dost most mournfully misjudge a "skyer,"
And lose a match the Fates cannot restore,
"This is the end of every man's desire !"

ENVOY.

Alas ! yet liefer on Youth's hither shore,
Would I be some poor Player on scant hire,
Than King among the old, who play no more,—
"*This* is the end of every man's desire !"

III.—BALLADE OF THE SOUTHERN CROSS.

FAIR islands of the silver fleece,
Hoards of unsunned, uncounted gold,
Whose havens are the haunts of Peace,
Whose boys are in our quarrel bold ;
Our bolt is shot, our tale is told,
Our ship of state in storms may toss,
But ye are young if we are old,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross !

Aye, *we* must dwindle and decrease,
Such fates the ruthless years unfold ;
And yet we shall not wholly cease,
We shall not perish unconsold ;
Nay, still shall Freedom keep her hold
Within the sea's inviolate fosse,
And boast her sons of English mould,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross !

Old empires tumble—Rome and Greece—
Their swords are rust, their altars cold !
For us, the Children of the Seas,
Who ruled where'er the waves have rolled,
For us, in Fortune's books enscrolled,
I read no runes of hopeless loss ;
Nor—while *ye* last—our knell is tolled,
Ye Islands of the Southern Cross !

ENVOY.

Britannia, when thy hearth's a-cold,
When o'er thy grave has grown the moss,
Still "*Rule Australia*" shall be trolled
In Islands of the Southern Cross !

IV.—BALLADE TO THEOCRITUS IN WINTER.

ἔσορῶν τὰν Σιχελὰν ἐς ἄλα.

Id. viii., 56.

AH! leave the smoke, the wealth, the roar
 Of London, and the bustling street,
 For still, by the Sicilian shore,
 The murmur of the Muse is sweet.
 Still, still, the suns of summer greet
 The mountain-grave of Helikê,
 And shepherds still their songs repeat
 Where breaks the blue Sicilian Sea.

What though they worship Pan no more,
 That guarded once the shepherd's seat,
 They chatter of their rustic lore,
 They watch the wind among the wheat :
 Cicalas chirp, the young lambs bleat,
 Where whispers pine to cypress tree ;
 They count the waves that idly beat,
 Where breaks the blue Sicilian Sea.

Theocritus ! thou canst restore
 The pleasant years, and over fleet ;
 With thee we live as men of yore,
 We rest where running waters meet :
 And then we turn unwilling feet
 And seek the world—so must it be.—
We may not linger in the heat
 Where breaks the blue Sicilian Sea.

ENVOY.

Master,—when rain, and snow, and sleet
 And northern winds are wild, to thee
 We come, we rest in thy retreat,
 Where breaks the blue Sicilian Sea !

GRASS OF PARNASSUS.

ANDREW LANG.

I.—TWILIGHT ON TWEED.

THREE crests against the saffron sky,
Beyond the purple plain,
The kind remembered melody
Of Tweed once more again.

Wan water from the border hills,
Dear voice from the old years,
Thy distant music lulls and stills,
And moves to quiet tears.

Like a loved ghost thy fabled flood
Fleets through the dusky land ;
Where Scott, come home to die, has stood,
My feet returning stand.

A mist of memory broods and floats,
The Border waters flow ;
The air is full of ballad notes,
Borne out of long ago.

Old songs that sung themselves to me,
Sweet through a boy's day-dream,
While trout below the blossom'd tree
Flashed in the golden stream.

* * * * *

Twilight, and Tweed, and Eildon Hill,
Fair and too fair you be ;
You tell me that the voice is still
That should have welcomed me.

II.—NIGHTINGALE WEATHER.

"Serai-je nonnette, oui ou non ?
 Serai-je nonnette ? je crois que non
 Derrière chez mon père
 Il est un bois taillis,
 Le rossignol y chante
 Et le jour et la nuit.
 Il chante pour les filles
 Qui n'ont pas d'ami ;
 Il ne chant pas pour moi,
 J'en ai un, Dieu merci."—OLD FRENCH.

I'LL never be a nun, I trow,
 While apple bloom is white as snow,
 But far more fair to see ;
 I'll never wear nun's black and white
 While nightingales make sweet the night
 Within the apple tree.

Ah, listen ! 'tis the nightingale,
 And in the wood he makes his wail,
 Within the apple tree ;

He singeth of the sore distress
 Of many ladies loverless ;
 Thank God, no song for me.

For when the broad May moon is low,
 A gold fruit seen where blossoms blow

In the bough of the apple tree,
 A step I know is at the gate—
 Ah love, but it is long to wait
 Until night's noon bring thee !

Between lark's song and nightingale's
 A silent space, while dawning pales,
 The birds leave still and free
 For words and kisses musical,
 For silence and for sighs that fall
 In the dawn, 'twixt him and me.

III.—GOOD-BYE.

KISS me, and say good-bye ;
 Good-bye, there is no word to say but this,
 Nor any lips left for my lips to kiss,
Nor any tears to shed, when these tears dry ;
Kiss me, and say good-bye.

Farewell, be glad, forget ;
 There is no need to say "forget," I know,
 For youth is youth and time will have it so,
And though your lips are pale, and your eyes wet,
Farewell, you must forget.

You shall bring home your sheaves,
 Many, and heavy, and with blossoms twined
 Of memories that go not out of mind ;
Let this one sheaf be twined with poppy leaves
When you bring home your sheaves.

In garnered loves of thine,
 The ripe good fruit of many hearts and years,
 Somewhere let this lie, grey and salt with tears ;
It grew too near the sea wind, and the brine
Of life, this love of mine.

This sheaf was spoiled in spring,
 And over-long was green, and early sere,
 And never gathered gold in the late year
From autumn suns, and moons of harvesting,
But failed in frosts of spring.

Yet was it thine, my sweet,
 This love, though weak as young corn withered,
 Whereof no man may gather and make bread ;
Thine, though it never knew the summer heat ;
Forget not quite, my sweet.

IV.—A DREAM.

WHY will you haunt my sleep ?
You know it may not be,
The grave is wide and deep,
That sunders you and me ;
In bitter dreams we reap
The sorrow we have sown,
And I would I were asleep
Forgotten and alone !

We knew and did not know,
We saw and did not see,
The nets that long ago
Fate wove for you and me ;
The cruel nets that keep
The birds that sob and moan
And I would we were asleep
Forgotten and alone !

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*V.—THEY HEAR THE SIRENS FOR THE
SECOND TIME.*

THE weary sails a moment slept,
The oars were silent for a space,
As past Hesperian shores we swept
That were as a remembered face
Seen after lapse of hopeless years,
In Hades, when the shadows meet,
Dim through the mist of many tears,
And strange, and though a shadow, sweet.

So seemed the half-remembered shore,
That slumbered, mirrored in the blue,
With havens where we touched of yore,
And ports that over well we knew,

Then broke the calm before the breeze
That sought the secret of the west ;
And listless all we swept the seas
Towards the Islands of the Blest.

Beside a golden sanded bay
We saw the Sirens, very fair
The flowery hill whereon they lay,
The flowers set upon their hair.
Their old sweet song came down the wind,
Remembered music waxing strong,—
Ah, now no need of cords to bind,
No need had we of Orphic song.

It once had seemed a little thing
To lay our lives down at their feet,
That dying we might hear them sing,
And dying see their faces sweet ;
But now, we glanced, and passing by,
No care had we to tarry long ;
Faint hope, and rest, and memory
Were more than any Siren's song.

VI.—MELEAGER.

I.

HELIODORE.

POUR wine, and cry, again, again, again,
 To Heliodore !
And mingle the sweet word ye call in vain
 With that ye pour :
And bring to me her wreath of yesterday
 That's dark with myrrh ;
Hesternae Rosae, ah, my friends, but they
Remember her.

Lo! the kind roses, loved of lovers, weep,
As who repine ;
For if on any breast they see her sleep,
It is not mine.

II.

HELIODORE DEAD.

TEARS for my lady dead,
Heliodore !
Salt tears and ill to shed,
Over and o'er.
Tears for my lady dead,
Sighs do we send,
Long love rememberèd,
Mistress and friend.
Sad are the songs we sing,
Tears that we shed.
Empty the gifts we bring,
Gifts to the dead.
Go tears, and go lament !
Fare from her tomb,
Wend where my lady went,
Down through the gloom.
Ah, for my flower, my love
Hades hath taken !
Ah for the dust above
Scattered and shaken !
Mother of all things born,
Earth, in thy breast,
Lull her that all men mourn
Gently to rest !

SONNETS.

ANDREW LANG.

I.—HOMER.

HOMER, thy song men liken to the sea
With all the notes of music in its tone,
With tides that wash the dim dominion
Of Hades, and light waves that laugh in glee
Around the isles enchanted; nay, to me
Thy verse seems as the River of source unknown
That glasses Egypt's temples overthrown
In his sky-nurtured stream, eternally.
No wiser we than men of heretofore
To find thy sacred fountains guarded fast;
Enough, thy flood makes green our human shore,
As Nilus Egypt, rolling down his vast
His fertile flood, that murmurs evermore
Of gods dethroned, and empires in the past.

II.—HOMERIC UNITY.

THE sacred keep of Ilion is rent
By shaft and pit; foiled waters wander slow
Through plains where Simois and Scamander went
To war with Gods and heroes long ago.
Not yet to tired Cassandra, lying low
In rich Mycenæ, do the Fates relent:
The bones of Agamemnon are a show,
And ruined in his royal monument.
The dust and awful treasures of the Dead,
Hath Learning scattered wide, but vainly thee,
Homer, she meteth with her tool of lead,
And strives to rend thy songs; too blind to see
The crown that burns on thine immortal head
Of indivisible supremacy!

III.—THE ODYSSEY.

AS one that for a weary space has lain
Lulled by the song of Circe and her wine
In gardens near the pale of Proserpine,
Where that Ægean isle forgets the main,
And only the low lutes of love complain,
And only shadows of wan lovers pine,
As such an one were glad to know the brine
Salt on his lips, and the large air again,—
So gladly, from the songs of modern speech
Men turn, and see the stars, and feel the free
Shrill wind beyond the close of heavy flowers,
And through the music of the languid hours,
They hear like ocean on the western beach
The surge and thunder of the Odyssey.

IV.—COLONEL BURNABY.

THOU that on every field of earth and sky
Didst hunt for Death, who seemed to flee and fear,
How great and greatly fallen dost thou lie
Slain in the Desert by some wandering spear
“Not here; alas!” may England say—“not here
Nor in this quarrel was it meet to die,
But in that dreadful battle drawing nigh,
To thunder through the Afghan passes sheer,
Like Aias by the ships shouldst thou have stood,
And in some glen have stayed the stream of flight,
The bulwark of thy people and their shield,
When Indus or when Helmund ran with blood,
And back, into the Northland and the Night,
The smitten Eagles scattered from the field.’

Samuel Waddington.

1844.

AMONG "the secretest walks of fame," there is none more exquisite than that of those whose loving care of some precious thing of Art has come to be rewarded by the survival of their names linked in fragrant association with the thing itself, as the name of Maréchal Neil passes down the summers on the breath of a rose.

Of such, those who have watched over various literary forms, and especially from time to time that of the sonnet, have been singularly fortunate. It was, perhaps, more because he loved much than achieved greatly that we still occasionally repeat the name of Guittone d'Arezzo, to whom Mr. Waddington, with scrupulous justice very pleasant to see, never forgets to accord that honour which one is accustomed to see the fame of Petrarch absorb, the formulation and first successful cultivation of the sonnet. Bowles, again—though Coleridge did copy him in manuscript as we have lately been transcribing Omar—what is there to plead against oblivion for his name, unless we forget that he wrote but few sonnets and only remember that he laid bare once more that "scanty plot" lost so long beneath forgetful brambles, which if he did not cultivate himself, was thus left ready for Wordsworth?

Such, till a year or two ago, was the reputation of Mr. Samuel Waddington. The mention of his name conjured up one association, we thought of three or four dainty anthologies of the sonnet; though one did not really forget how much we also owed him on behalf of the author of the wonderful "Bothie."

But since then he has won a still more vital association with the sonnet, that of being himself a sonneteer. His "Sonnets and Other Verse," in 1884, was his first original volume. A "Century of Sonnets" (George Bell & Sons) was not published until five years later.

These sonnets have just the charm that one would look for in the work of one with Mr. Waddington's particular artistic passion, just that careful workmanship, that proportion of means with material, that meditative mood and that reticence of manner, which belong by nature to this well-bred form, but also instinct with that thought and fancy without which all form is vain. Of his "Century of Sonnets" a writer in the *Athenæum* (April 5th, 1890) observes: "It is not too much to say that of his hundred sonnets there is not one which is not admirable for completeness and finish. The skilful strictness with which he obeys the laws to which he submits himself is noteworthy, and shows that the management of verse has no difficulties left for him. . . . All his sonnets are good in thought and expression, and some are beautiful." The following sonnet, which is perhaps one of the most successful of Mr. Waddington's compositions, was contributed by him to the Beatrice Exhibition held at Florence in 1890, and is not included in either of his volumes:—

BEATA BEATRIX.

*"Ella ha perduta la sua Beatrice :
E le parole ch'uom di tei può dire
Hanno virtù di far piangere altrui."*

VITA NUOVA.

"AND was it thine, the light whose radiance shed
Love's halo round the gloom of Dante's brow ?
Was thine the hand that touched his hand, and thou
The spirit to his inmost spirit wed ?
O gentle, O most pure, what shall be said
In praise of thee to whom Love's minstrels bow ?
O heart that held his heart, for ever now
Thou with his glory shalt be garlanded.
Lo 'mid the twilight of the waning years,
Firenze claims once more our love, our tears :
But thou, triumphant on the throne of song—
By Mary seated in the realm above—
O, give us of that gift than death more strong,
The loving spirit that won Dante's love."

As was to be expected, Mr. Waddington tries various experiments with his vehicle. Thus his volumes contain examples in lines of six, eight, and eleven syllables; also others in which the first line occurs throughout as a refrain making the fifth, ninth, and last lines. It is to be questioned, however, whether the latter, at least, can strictly be regarded as sonnets at all, for whatever their effectiveness, it is not of specially sonnet quality—not to speak of the violation of the formal laws of their rhythmical being. But such detailed criticism is hardly within the scope of a notice necessarily so brief as this. What has been said of Mr. Waddington's sonnets as a whole remains.

Samuel Waddington was born at Boston Spa, Yorkshire, in the year 1844. His first school was

St. Peter's School, York, but he was soon taken thence to St. John's, Huntingdon, whence in course of time he passed to Brasenose College, Oxford, where he took his B.A. degree in 1865.

His intention had been to enter the Church, but although Dr. Pusey was then at the height of his influence at Oxford, and though Mr. Waddington was among that privileged few who sat at those private lectures in the Doctor's own rooms, still more rationalistic impulses prevailed ; and the idea of ordination was abandoned.

So, having obtained a nomination from the Duke of Richmond to a vacancy there he entered the Board of Trade, in course of time to make one of that charming Whitehall *coterie* destined, one must think, to live in literary history beside that other famous one at the India House.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

LYRICS AND SONNETS.

SAMUEL WADDINGTON.

I.—“IS THERE LIGHT UPON THE UPLANDS?”

IS there light upon the uplands, breaks the dawn
along the sea,—
Do the buds of promise blossom, is it well with thee
and me ?

What the herald prophets whisper doth the crowd
with welcome greet,
Do the echoes of the mountains still their hallowed
truths repeat ?

Stars that shoot across the darkness vanish where
we may not see ;
And if still the darkness lingers, what, O soul, is
that to thee ?

Though the creeds of Folly fail not, though the lamp
of Truth burns low,
Though here still upon our altar loom the shades of
long ago,—

Yet the day is waxing stronger, clearer light is shed
around ;
And with garlands of new worship soon Endeavour
shall be crowned.

Though the waves that shoreward hasten vanish
back into the sea,
Yet the flowing tide advances, and 'tis well with thee
and me.

Fairer than the night of sorrow, hours of dolour
undefined,
Comes the dawn of matin gladness bringing sunshine
to the mind :

Fairer than the dream of Eden and the human-race
condemned,
Is the gospel of Good-service, and all men by Man
reclaimed :

Fairer than the suppliants kneeling, and the cries to
heaven above,
Are the brave heart's honest Labour and the creed
of Human Love :

'Mid the shadows though we wandered, phantom
shadows of the brain,
Now earth's 'Jubilate' soundeth, and our hearts
are glad again :

For we know that joy abideth with the soul that
still is true,
And all men shall reap their harvest, every man
shall have his due.

II.—MORS ET VITA.

WE know not yet what life shall be,
What shore beyond earth's shore be set;
What grief awaits us, or what glee,
We know not yet.

Still, somewhere in sweet converse met,
Old friends, we say, beyond death's sea
Shall meet and greet us, nor forget

Those days of yore, those years when we
Were loved and true—but will death let
Our eyes the longed-for vision see?
We know not yet.

III.—ON THE HEIGHTS.

HERE where the heather blooms
 'Neath the blue skies,
Here let us rest awhile,
 What if time flies,—
Joy yet awaiteth us
 Ere the day dies.

See how the pathway creeps
 Round the cliff side ;
Serpent-like seemeth it
 Upward to glide :
Here 'mid the heather long
 We will abide.

Nature around us lies
 Placid and still,—
Nature ! thy children, we
 Wait on thy will ;
Happy and silent here,
 Here on thy hill.

Are we not part of thee,
 Born of thee, thine ?
Shall we not come to thee,—
 Kneel at thy shrine ?
Nature, we turn to thee,
 Thou art divine.

Peace that is sweet to us,
 Strife for its leaven,
Hate that is hell to us,
 Love that is heaven,—
These for our good, we know,
 Us hast thou given.

Self-love, a secret force
Goads us on ;
Sympathy holding us
Bound-fast in one,—
Creature to creature linked,
Father to son.

Hope in the morning, and
Strength at the noon,
Rest in the eventide,
These are thy boon ;
Sleep, with the darkness, thou
Sendest, and soon.

Full well thou teachest us
Where'er we turn,
All that is meet for us
Earthborn to learn,—
From what is evil here
Good to discern.

This, too, we learn of thee,
This to be true,—
All things about us, both
Old things and new,
Pass, and the power of them
Fades as it grew.

While in the manifold
Births that unroll,
Shaping the universe,
Breathes but one soul,—
One long existence,—one
Infinite whole.

IV.—THE INN OF CARE.

AT Nebra, by the Unstrut,—
So travellers declare,—
There stands an ancient tavern,
It is the 'Inn of Care.'
To all the world 'tis open ;
It sets a goodly fare ;
And every soul is welcome
That deigns to sojourn there.
The landlord with his helpers,
(He is a stalwart host,)
To please his guest still labours
With 'bouilli ' and with 'roast' ;—
And ho ! he laughs so roundly,
He laughs, and loves to boast
That he who bears the beaker
May live to share the 'toast.'

Lucus a non lucendo—
Thus named might seem the inn,
So careless is its laughter,
So loud its merry din ;
Yet ere to doubt its title
You do, in sooth, begin,
Go, watch the pallid faces
Approach and pass within.
To Nebra, by the Unstrut,
May all the world repair,
And meet a hearty welcome,
And share a goodly fare ;
The world ! 'tis worn and weary—
'Tis tired of guilt and glare !
The inn ! 'tis named full wisely,
It is the 'Inn of Care.'

V.—NATURE.

THIS mount shall be our fane, a holy place !
No acolyte shall swing the thurible,

Nor whispering worshipper his rosary tell ;
No priest shall here stand robed in lawn and lace ;
But the Eternal shall look down through space,
And we will gaze and wonder :—it is well !

Here where the heath-flower and the wild thyme dwell,
How sweet is life, how fair, how full of grace !

In place of prayer we'll chant our joyous praise,
And with glad voices sing in Nature's choir :

These lines of fir shall see on Sabbath-days
Our faces flushing with our heart's desire,
As up the mountain side through wooded ways,
We seek that peace to which our souls aspire.

VI.—“FROM NIGHT TO NIGHT.”

FROM night to night, through circling darkness whirled
Day dawns, and wanes, and still leaves, as before,

The shifting tides and the eternal shore :
Sources of life, and forces of the world,
Unseen, unknown, in folds of mystery furled,
Unseen, unknown, remain for evermore ;—
To heaven-hid heights man's questioning soul would soar,
Yet falls from darkness unto darkness hurled !

Angels of light, ye spirits of the air,

Peopling of yore the dreamland of our youth,
Ye who once led us through those scenes so fair,
Lead now, and leave us near the realm of Truth :
Lo, if in dreams some truths we chanced to see,
Now in the truth some dreams may haply be.

VII.—SOUL AND BODY.

WHERE wert thou, Soul, ere yet my body born
Became thy dwelling place? Didst thou on earth,
Or in the clouds, await this body's birth?
Or by what chance upon that winter's morn
Didst thou this body find, a babe forlorn?
Didst thou in sorrow enter, or in mirth?
Or for a jest, perchance, to try its worth
Thou tookest flesh, ne'er from it to be torn?

Nay, Soul, I will not mock thee; well I know
Thou wert not on the earth, nor in the sky;
For with my body's growth thou too didst grow;
But with that body's death wilt thou too die?
I know not, and thou canst not tell me, so
In doubt we'll go together—thou and I.

VIII.—NIGHT-FALL.

THE shades of evening lengthen,—let us close
The latticed window, and draw down the blind;
These shadows seem as spirits, and the wind
Moans in its wandering; mournfully it goes
As some poor soul that grievous sorrow knows,
Or homeward traveller fearful lest he find
Beside his hearth the doom that haunts his mind,
And o'er his pathway its grim visage shows.

As haunted houses are our haunted hearts,
Wherein pale spirits of past sorrows dwell!
Wherein, as players that play many parts,
Presentiments their tragic tales foretell!
Draw close the curtain,—ay, shut out the night;
The night is dark, let love then be our light.

IX.—“THROUGH THE NIGHT WATCHES.”

THROUGH the night-watches, Sleep, we picture thee,
Now as a bridge that links two neighbouring lands,
One worn and barren as the sea's bare sands,
One sown and fruitful with all things to be :—
Now as a mist that spreadeth silently,
We see thee hiding with thy vaporous hands
The good that gladdens, and the guilt that brands,
The griefs that follow, and the joys that flee.

And now a seraph, an angelic guide,
Thy white wings reaching to thy noiseless feet,
We see thee leading to each loved one's side
The longed for figure that each loves to greet :
Oh, while the darkness and the night abide,
Be thou love's guide, and guide me to my Sweet.

X.—SELF-SACRIFICE.

WHAT though thine arm hath conquered in the fight,—
What though the vanquished yield unto thy sway,
Or riches garnered pave thy golden way,—
Not therefore hast thou gained the sovran height
Of man's nobility ! No halo's light
From these shalt round thee shed its sacred ray ;
If these be all thy joy,—then dark thy day,
And darker still thy swift approaching night !

But if in thee more truly than in others
Hath dwelt love's charity ;—if by thine aid
Others have passed above thee, and if thou,
Though victor, yieldest victory to thy brothers,
Though conquering conquered, and a vassal made,—
Then take thy crown, well mayst thou wear it now.

•

Eugene Lee-Hamilton.

1845.

THIS poet was born in London, in January 1845. He received his education in France and Germany, proceeded in 1864 to Oxford, and five years afterwards entered the diplomatic service. After working at the English Embassy in Paris, and taking part in the Alabama arbitration at Geneva, he was appointed Secretary of the Legation at Lisbon. Here his health broke down in 1873. He became subject to a cerebro-spinal malady, which has forced him, like Heine in his latter years, to assume the attitude of supine inactivity, a condition he makes pathetic reference to in the following sonnet "To the Muse":—

"To keep through life the posture of the grave,
While others walk and run and dance and leap ;
To keep it ever, waking or asleep,
While shrink the limbs which Nature goodly gave ;
In summer's heat to breast no more the wave,
Nor tread the cornfield where the reapers reap ;
To wade no more through tangled grasses deep,
Nor press the moss beneath some leafy nave ;
In winter days no more to hear the ring
Of frozen earth, the creak of crisp, fresh snow ;
No more to roam where scarlet berries cling
To leafless twigs, and pluck the ripe blue sloe—
'Tis hard, 'tis hard, but thou dost bring relief,
Fair, welcome Muse, sweet soother of all grief."

Under these painful conditions the poet awoke in him ; and though he now can only dictate what the

ardent brain indites, though he can scarcely bear to receive verbal communications in more than sentences of a few words at a time, the many years which have passed across his manhood stretched upon a couch of suffering, are marked by a succession of volumes testifying to the ever vivid and unconquerable spirit of the man. "Poems and Transcripts" (1878), "Gods, Saints, and Men" (1880), "The New Medusa" (1882), "Apollo and Marsyas" (1884), "Imaginary Sonnets" (1888), "The Fountain of Youth" (1891), are the titles of six milestones on his road to a well-earned place in English poetry. It only remains to add that Mr. Lee-Hamilton is half-brother to Miss Violet Paget, famous to all students of our literature under the name of Vernon Lee.

Toward the criticism of Mr. Lee-Hamilton's poetry I cannot perhaps advance anything beyond what I wrote in *The Academy* upon the appearance of "Apollo and Marsyas." At that time the study of these earlier volumes had enabled his readers to form a definite conception of his peculiar ability. His most salient quality appeared to be a power of identifying himself through the imagination with abnormal personalities, exposed to the pressure of unusual circumstance or exceptional temptation. Without being formally dramatic, he makes the men and women of his fancy tell their own tale, or tells it for them in narrative that has the force of a confession. The reality of his studies of character not unfrequently amounts to revelation; so completely, so painfully, has he absorbed the psychical nature of the subject he is dealing with into his own. While forcing the reader to see what he has

seen in mental vision, he is aided by a vivid faculty of picture-painting. This faculty of suggesting scenes and images is always potent in his work; most remarkably so when it is employed in creating the environment of some dark psychological tragedy. As a fine example of its simple strength I may cite the "Letter addressed to Miss Mary Robinson" (p. 233). It is still more prominent in a poem called "The Raft," and in the ballad of "The Death of the Duchess Isabella." These powers of dramatic insight and pictorial presentment are further qualified by a pronounced partiality for the horrible, the well-nigh impossible, the fantastically weird. His imagination delights in realising states of mind and caprices of the fancy which lie outside healthy human experience. "The New Medusa" may be cited as an illustration. Sometimes, too, he dwells on subjects which, in naked prose, are too revolting to bear the application of descriptive art in poetry. Such is the ballad of "The Sack of Prato." Such, too, is the acutely painful study of an anatomist preparing for the vivisection of a man, called "A Rival of Fallopius." Here Mr. Lee-Hamilton might claim Poe for master; but Poe's dry manner lent itself more appropriately to literature which aims at being ghastly or uncanny. The disciple's dissection of cruelty and madness is too subjective to be otherwise than repellent.

Technically, Mr. Lee-Hamilton commands a wide and picturesque vocabulary, and is not without considerable power over both rhyme and metre. His language is direct, spontaneous, unrestrained. But, in diction and versification alike, he is apt, when not working under severe restraints of form, to be more

careless than befits an artist in the present age. His effects suffer also, in my opinion, from a want of reserve, an inattention to the advantages of compression. This accounts for the fact that he succeeds so well in the sonnet, which imposes limitations on his luxuriance. His volumes contain some of the best pictorial and dramatic sonnets in our language.

In illustration of the pictorial quality we may quote the sonnet "Louis de Ligny to Leonora Altamura, 1495," from "Imaginary Sonnets" (1888).

"The amber battlements of castled cloud ;
The phantom isles that fool a ship at sea ;
The congregated minarets that flee
And cheat the caravan's worn thirsty crowd ;

All those lost towns which fishermen have vowed
They saw in lakes whose fathoms countless be,
While from the depths there rose up solemnly
The sound of bells, as on their oars they bowed :

There will we live together, thou and I ;
Fit dwelling for such happiness as ours,
Which lasts but for a moment, and must die ;

Our palace with its evanescent towers
Melts back into the waters on the sky
As quickly as a dream that Dawn devours."

The volume entitled "Apollo and Marsyas" takes its name from the Greek legend of the rivalry between the Satyr and the Olympian. Marsyas, for Mr. Lee-Hamilton, symbolises all that is remote, wild, pain-compelling, orgiastic, in the music of the world. Apollo represents its pure, defined, and chastened melodies. To Marsyas belongs the thrilling Phrygian, to Apollo the bracing Dorian mood. Of his personal susceptibility to the influence of Marsyas Mr. Lee-Hamilton makes no secret ; and one of the

most striking of his poems in this book, "Sister Mary of the Plague," illustrates the extent to which he has submitted to that fascination of the terrible. Sister Mary is a nurse in a Belgian hospital, assiduous in her duties, and venerated by the people. Yet her patients, in spite of her best care, are apt to die of slow exhaustion. We soon perceive that all is not right; nay, that there is something horribly wrong about her. The power of the poem consists in this: that Sister Mary herself awakes with agony to the conviction that she is a vampire, one who had died of the plague, and has arisen to protract a hideous existence by draining the life-blood of the living. This motive would be too repulsive but for the tragic moral situation thus created. The vampire is herself the victim of a destiny she abhors, and obeys somnambulistically. So her story becomes an allegory of those psychological aberrations which are known as moral insanity, where the sufferer from some abnormal appetite is terror-stricken in his lucid intervals by what his morbid impulses have forced him to enact. A somewhat similar study of the tormented conscience is attempted in "The Wonder of the World" and "Ipsissimus." Owing to the length of Mr. Lee-Hamilton's poems it is exceedingly difficult to represent him adequately in a work like this. The last-named poem "Ipsissimus" is given in the following pages, not because it is the best, but because it is shorter than others, and therefore more easily included.

While reviewing Mr. Lee-Hamilton in 1889 I ventured to express the hope that in the future he would pay his vows with greater assiduity to Apollo; Marsyas had controlled him long enough, and not

without some detriment to his artistic faculty. His volume, "Imaginary Sonnets," has to a large extent shown that he can submit to the saner impulse of the Olympian deity. It consists entirely of sonnets, each written upon a noticeable personality in the world's history, setting forth some decisive incident or turning-point of action in the individual's life. Considered as a *tour-de-force*, the series must be reckoned remarkable in a very high degree. It illustrates the poet's leading faculty for penetrating and expressing moods, and for presenting these dramatically and pictorially. Still, there is a sense of effort, a want of rest, in this long picture-gallery of thrilling moments. We feel, when we close the book, the force of that Greek proverb: "The half is more than the whole." "The Fountain of Youth, a Fantastic Tragedy in Five Acts" (1891) deals with the legend of Prince de Leon, well known for its romantic fascination. Here the poet appears to have concentrated all his faculties and qualities on the production of the work; the lyrical passages showing a variety of form and a freedom of handling which had hardly been anticipated in previous performances.

JOHN ADDINGTON SYMONDS.

POEMS AND SONNETS.

EUGENE LEE-HAMILTON.

I.—IPSISSIMUS.

THOU priest that art behind the screen
Of this confessional, give ear :
I need God's help, for I have seen
What turns my vitals limp with fear.
O Christ, O Christ, I must have done
More mortal sin than anyone
Who says his prayers in Venice here !

And yet by stealth I only tried
To kill my enemy, God knows ;
And who on earth has ere denied
A man the right to kill his foes ?
He won the race of the Gondoliers ;
I hate him and the skin he wears ;
I hate him and the shade he throws.

I hate him through each day and hour ;
All ills that curse me seem his fault :
He makes my daily soup taste sour,
He makes my daily bread taste salt :
And so I hung upon his track
At dusk to stab him in the back
In some lone street or archway vault.

But oh give heed ! As I was stealing
Upon his heels, with knife grasped tight,
There crept across my soul a feeling
That I myself was kept in sight ;
Each time I turned, dodge as I would,
A masked and unknown watcher stood,
Who baffled all my plan that night.

What mask is this, I thought and thought,
Who dogs me thus when least I care ?
His figure is nor tall nor short,
And yet has a familiar air.
But oh, despite this watcher's eye,
I'll reach my man yet by-and-by,
And snuff his life out yet, elsewhere.

And though compelled to still defer,
I schemed another project soon ;
I armed my boat with a hidden spur
To run him down in the lagoon.
At dusk I saw him row one day
Where lone and wide the waters lay,
Reflecting scarce the dim white moon.

No boat, as far as sight could strain,
Loomed on the solitary sea ;
I saw my oar each minute gain
Upon my death-doomed enemy,
When lo, a black-masked gondolier,
Silent and spectre-like, drew near,
And stepped between my deed and me.

He seemed from out the flood to rise,
And hovered near to mar my game ;
I knew him and his cursed guise,
His cursed mask : he was the same.
So, balked once more, enraged and cowed,
Back through the still lagoon I rowed
In mingled wonder, wrath, and shame.

Oh, were I not to come and pray
Thee for thy absolution here
In the confessional, to-day,
My very ribs would burst with fear.

Leave not, good Father, in the lurch,
A faithful son of Mother Church,
Whose faith is firm and soul sincere.

Behind St. Luke's, as the dead men know,
A pale apothecary dwells,
Who deals in death both quick and slow,
And baleful philters, withering spells ;
He sells alike to rich and poor,
Who know what knock to give his door,
The yellow dust that rings the knells.

Well, then, I went and knocked the knock
With cautious hand, as I'd been taught ;
The door revolved with silent lock,
And I went in, suspecting nought.
But oh, the selfsame form stood masked
Behind the counter, and unasked
In silence proffered what I sought.

My knees and hands like aspens shook :
I spilt the powder on the ground ;
I dared not turn, I dared not look ;
My palsied tongue would make no sound.
Then through the door I fled at last,
With feet that seemed more slow than fast,
And dared not even once look round.

And yet I am an honest man
Who only sought to kill his foe :
Could I sit down and see each plan
That I took up frustrated so,
When as each plan was marred and balked,
And in the sun my man still walked,
I felt my hate still greater grow ?

I thought, "At dusk with stealthy tread
I'll seek his dwelling, and I'll creep
Upstairs and hide beneath his bed,
And in the night I'll strike him deep."
And so I went; but at the door,
The figure, masked just as before,
Sat on the step as if asleep.

Bent, spite all fear, upon my task,
I tried to pass: there was no space.
Then rage prevailed; I snatched the mask
From off the baffling figure's face,
And oh, unutterable dread!
The face was mine, mine white and dead,
Stiff with some frightful death's grimace.

What sins are mine, O luckless wight,
That doom should play me such a trick,
And make me see a sudden sight
That turns both soul and body sick?
Stretch out thy hands, thou priest unseen,
That sittest there behind the screen,
And give me absolution quick!

O God, O God, his hands are dead!
His hands are mine, O monstrous spell!
I feel them clammy on my head,
Is he my own dead self as well?
Those hands are mine—their scars, their shape:
O God, O God, there's no escape,
And seeking Heaven, I fall to Hell.

II.—A LETTER.

TO A. MARY F. ROBINSON.

A PROMISE is the frailest thing I know :
A very soap-bubble which rashness flings
On whatsoever breeze may chance to blow ;
We watch it float, and in its iris-glow
See fair precarious things.

And you have promised to return and spend
A while with us ere Tuscan leaves be sere ;
Oh break your promise not, nor grieve a friend
To whom the Fates but little pleasure send,
I ween, from year to year.

Come with the dying summer's golden mist ;
Come with the ripeness of the autumn air ;
Come when the sun aweary shall desist,
And when all Nature, long too fiercely kissed,
Lies weak, but not less fair.

Come when no more the endless noontide creeps,
And each hot tile-roof tremulously streams ;
Come when no more the shrill cicala keeps
Sawing the empty air, and he who sleeps
Abhors it through his dreams.

Come when no more the vesper bell shall rouse
The inmates of each sun-entranced abode ;
And when no more the peasant shades with boughs,
His slow, white oxen's fly-tormented brows,
Upon the glaring road.

Come when the hungry yellow wasp forestalls
The vintager, and mars the prosperous grape ;
And when the vine leaves on the trellised walls
Take hectic patches ere the bunches fall
In hods of conic shape.

Come when the splitting wrapper of the maize
The massive golden lump no more can hold ;
And when the meanest cottage front displays
A tapestry of ingots, which outweighs
All Eldorado's gold.

Come when the chestnut drops with rustling sound,
Through scanty leaves, and bursts its bristly husk
Just at your feet upon the mossy ground,
Where fragrant ferns and flowers wild abound
And scent the early dusk.

Oh, they are sweet, those chestnut woods where never
My foot, alas, can trample down the moss—
Those woods where others, full of health, may sever
The ferny stems, while I, debarred for ever,
Hold all, save strength, as dross.

The old, old chestnut-trees, whose trunks uncouth,
All gray with lichen and of monstrous girth,
Are hollowed out, and gnawed by each year's tooth,
Have bright green leaves, like impulses of youth
Which in old hearts take birth.

They cover the innumerable spurs
Of Apennine, the mighty boulders crowned
By village strongholds, walled, and black with years,
And penetrate the gullies where one hears
The storm-born torrents bound.

Which seek the limpid Lima, as it brings
Its waters to the Serchio, green and bright,
Beneath black bridges where the wall-flower clings,
And where the mirrored kingfisher oft wings
His straight and rapid flight.

And you will see, as through an open door,
Where Serchio's gorges suddenly expand ;
The Garfagnana rich with autumn's store,
Where Ariosto held command of yore—
A tract of faery land.

And watch the stream which, as the sun declines,
Winds like a glistening snake whose motion flags
Through ripeness-scented fields and reeds and vines,
Dividing from the cloud-capped Apennines
Carrara's marble crags.

But there are times, in later autumn's rains,
When that same stream is like no glistening snake,
But like a lion tawny flanked, which gains
In strength each moment, and whose roar retains
The anxious boor awake.

Then in its wrath, resistless Serchio tears
Through gorge and valley, threatening many a home ;
Shaking with watery claws the great stone piers
Of each old bridge, against whose strength it rears
With mane of muddy foam.

A desperate hug, which sometimes rips asunder
The stoutest arch, though deep the piles were driven ;
When, with a crack, which fills the hills with wonder,
The masonry, out-thundering the thunder,
Hurls up the flood to heaven.

But I must stop ; or else I shall defeat
My only object, to attract you here ;
And at the thought that you perhaps may meet
A sudden watery end, you will retreat
Elsewhere in haste and fear.

Be not afraid : but simply brush away
The picture I have held before your eyes.
I told you once that you were like a ray
Of sunshine ; and so long as sunshine stay
The river will not rise.

III.—SEA-SHELL MURMURS.

THE hollow sea-shell which for years hath stood
On dusty shelves, when held against the ear
Proclaims its stormy parent ; and we hear
The faint far murmur of the breaking flood.
We hear the sea. The sea ? It is the blood
In our own veins, impetuous and near,
And pulses keeping pace with hope and fear
And with our feelings' every shifting mood.

Lo ! in my heart I hear, as in a shell,
The murmur of a world beyond the grave,
Distinct, distinct, though faint and far it be.
Thou fool ; this echo is a cheat as well,—
The hum of earthly instincts ; and we crave
A world unreal as the shell-heard sea.

IV.—SUNKEN GOLD.

IN dim green depths rot ingot-laden ships,
While gold doubloons that from the drowned hand fell
Lie nestled in the ocean's flower bell
With Love's gemmed rings once kissed by now dead lips.
And round some wrought-gold cup the sea-grass whips
And hides lost pearls, near pearls still in their shell,
Where seaweed forests fill each ocean dell,
And seek dim sunlight with their countless tips.

So lie the wasted gifts, the long-lost hopes,
Beneath the now hushed surface of myself,
In lonelier depths than where the diver gropes
They lie deep, deep; but I at times behold
In doubtful glimpses, on some reefy shelf,
The gleam of irrecoverable gold.

V.—*PIA DEI TOLOMEI TO LOVE AND DEATH.*

(1295.)

THE distant hills are blue as lips of death;
Between myself and them the hot swamps steam
In fetid curls, which, in the twilight, seem
Like gathering phantoms waiting for my breath;
While in the August heat with chattering teeth
I sit, and icy limbs, and let the stream
Of recollection flow in a dull dream;
Or weave, with marish blooms, my own death-wreath.
O Love that hast undone me, and through whom
I waste in this Maremma: King of Sighs,
Behold thy handmaid in her heavy doom!
Send me thy brother Death who so oft flies
Across these marshes in the semi-gloom,
To bear me to thy amber-tinted skies.

VI.—*LUCA SIGNORELLI TO HIS SON.*

(1500.)

THEY brought thy body back to me quite dead,
Just as thou hadst been stricken in the brawl.

I let no tear, I let no curses fall,
But signed to them to lay thee on the bed ;
Then, with clenched teeth, I stripped thy clothes soaked red ;
And taking up my pencil at God's call,
All through the night I drew thy muscles all,
And writhed at every beauty of thy head ;
For I required the glory of thy limbs
To lend it to archangel and to saint,
And of thy brow, for brows with halo rims ;
And thou shalt stand, in groups which I will paint
Upon God's walls, till, like procession hymns
Lost in the distance, ages make them faint.

VII.—*THE LAST DOGE TO FETTERED VENICE.*

(1799.)

I SAW a phantom sitting in her rags
Upon a throne that sea-gods wrought of old ;
Her tatters, stamped with blazonry of gold,
Seemed made of remnants of victorious flags ;
Her face was fair, though wrinkled like a hag's,
And in the sun she shivered as with cold ;
While round her breast she tightened each torn fold
To hide her chains, more thick than felon drags,
O Venice, in the silence of the night,
I think of when thy vessels used to bring
The gems and spices of the plundered East
Up to thy feet, and like an endless flight
Of hurrying sea-birds, on a broad white wing,
Heaped up the gift that ever still increased.

Emily H. Hickey.

1845.

EMILY HENRIETTA HICKEY was born at Macmine Castle, near Enniscorthy, co. Wexford, Ireland, on the 12th of April, 1845. Her first published poem—"Told in the Firelight"—appeared in the *Cornhill Magazine* in 1866; and was followed by others contributed to various magazines, and afterwards collected into volumes, bearing titles as follows:—"A Sculptor and Other Poems" (1881), "Verse Tales, Lyrics and Translations" (1889), "Michael Villiers, Idealist, and Other Poems" (1891). In 1881 Miss Hickey co-operated with Dr. Furnivall in founding the Browning Society, of which she was for some time the honorary secretary. An edition of Browning's *Strafford* with annotations by her, appeared in 1884. She has also contributed critical articles to the *Academy* and other papers, and written several prose tales.

Miss Hickey's poems embrace many varieties of form and theme, from lyrics of love and nature to ballads of modern life and blank verse discussions of politico-economic and socialistic questions. That she sings often for song's sake is proved by many a spontaneous lyric, but that she is often deeply stirred by an earnest underlying purpose is clear in her longer and more important poems. There is with her no blind acceptance of traditionary bonds

either in religious, social, or political thought, and she claims her right, and shows her ability to discuss without prejudice fundamental questions too often accepted as settled. Of spontaneous lyrics the following "Love-song" may serve as an example:—

"I know not whether to laugh or cry,
So greatly, utterly glad am I :
For one, whose beautiful love-lit face
The distance hid for a weary space,
Has come this day of all days to me
Who am his home and his own country.
What shall I say who am here at rest,
Led from the good things up to the best ?
Little my knowledge, but this I know,
It was God said ' Love each other so.'
O love, my love, who hast come to me,
Thy love, thy home, and thy own country."

Such poems as "Her Dream," however, represent Miss Hickey at her best in lyric measures, while "A Sea Story" shows concentrated strength and no little dramatic power. Of her ballads, "Paddy" is one of the best, though they all maintain a fairly even level of merit. "For Richer, for Poorer" may represent her work in sonnet form:—

" ' Oh, give us of your oil, our lamps go out :
Your well-fed lamps are clear and bright to see ;
And, if we go to buy us oil, maybe,
Far off our ears shall hear the jubilant shout,
" Behold the Bridegroom cometh, zoned about
With utter light and utter harmony."
Then leave us not to weep continually
In darkness, for our souls' hunger and drought.'
Then turned one virgin of the virgins wise
To one among the foolish, with a low
Sweet cry, and looked her, lovelike, in the eyes,
Saying, ' My oil is thine ; for weal, for woe,
We two are one, and where thou goest I go ;
One lot being ours for aye, where'er it lies,' "

The most important, however, of Miss Hickey's works is "Michael Villiers, Idealist." The growing taste for what is brief and essentially slight in poetry, so that it be fresh and graceful and delicately finished, leads one to fear for a poem of some ninety-four pages, in which the sterner tragedies of social life, and the deeper aspirations stirred by them in natures instinct with the passion and pity of justice, find fervent expression; and where even such questions as the rights and wrongs of Ireland, the wages of matchbox-makers, and the ownership of the soil, are touched with courage and frankness. But, at least, "Michael Villiers" gives no support to those who excuse their preference for mere art and grace over thought and aim, by hinting that in poetry these are incompatible with each other. Nor is the work marred by the one-sided zeal which is so often unloving and unjust even in its very demanding of love and justice. Miss Hickey is not merely an enthusiast or reformer; she is a Christian poet, penetrated with a poet's reverence for all that is fair in the past, and having a poet's insight into varying human types and human standpoints and difficulties. Her ideal leader is a strong figure, drawn by a strong hand, and best described in her own language:—

(VI.)

"The Man we need this nineteenth century
Is no enthusiast of the hollow jaws,
And fever-lighted eyes, and hectic flush
On the spare cheek, and slender blue-veined hands
The morbid soul beats through; not such as this
No mediæval mystic, drained of blood,
And stript of flesh; all natural desires
Dazed in *hysterica passio*; he being fain

Annihilate the flesh and leave the soul
 Calm in her freedom ; cutting off his wings
 To fly unhindered. Nay, O world of ours,
 Not such as this must thy redeemer be !
 Nor yet the man who sayeth in his heart,
There is no God, nor any need of Him :
 Nor even he who knows the basal needs
 Of body, soul, and spirit, and denies
 No part of man : for more than this we cry !
 Not even the stronger than the strong for us ;
 We need the Christ in man ; not one strong man,
 But a developed manhood ; we must fight
 And bear, before we get Him ;—but, some day,
 If so we grudge not freedom's heavy price,
 Our loins shall teem with freeborn citizens,
 Having the Christhood's glory on their heads.

* * * * *

Now God bless all true workers, let us pray :
 The night-time cometh when we all must rest :
 Strive we, and do, lest by-and-by we sit
 In that blind life to which all other fate
 Is cause for envy ; with the naked souls
 Who never lived, knowing nor praise nor blame,
 But kept themselves in mean neutrality,
 Hateful alike to God and to His foes."

Full of inspiration for other idealists of to-day are her pictures of Michael and of the fair woman of his love, who "went among a set of working girls, rough, rude, unchaste in word if not in deed, and was a very light of joy to them in all the lovely rondure of her life and royal dower of inward happiness." But not even these are drawn with more strength and tenderness than the kindly, genial, old baronet, who has found nothing wanting in the good old-world commonplaces about rich and poor ; and, after the manner of his sires, has drawn gold in plenty from his Irish lands, and spent it all at St. George's other side. Always the realism is

of that nobler kind, which is the strength, not the weakness, of both art and life; the thought is as broad and kindly as it is high; and even the college friend, who brings the cool sophisms of pseudo-political economy to front the quick passion of Michael's sympathy for the weak, finds a place almost as cordial in the reader's liking as in that of the idealist himself. Very tender is the picture of the fair Irish girl and the vision which came to her: a vision of that perfected love of humanity, to which, at all cost of pain or strife to him, she would consecrate her unborn child:—

(1.)

“ But when at night upon her bed she lay,
That heart of hers was full of a strange light
Caught from the shining wings of motherhood
Which brooded warm and fair upon her life.
And happy thoughts went softly floating on,
Each with each blended, dear as undefined,
Breathing out scent, and light, and melody,
In one sweet fusion, till her heart was fain
To ease itself with tears. So the night wore,
With no unquiet counting of the hours;
And just before the dawn there came to her
A sudden dreadful poignancy of joy,
Piercing her soul like pain; and she cried out,
Her seemed, but John awaking heard as though
She laughed a little joyous laugh; and rose
To look upon her lovely face that lay
Sweet in the rippling sunshine of a smile,
In the grey quiet of the faded night;
Then kissed her with his eyes, because his mouth
Might break the slumber that she needed much,
And laid him down again saying, ‘ she dreams !
Sleep on, beloved, and wake to sweeter things
Than sweetest dreams can bring you ! ’ And he slept,
Unwitting of the vision Mary saw.”

The story of Michael's birth, of his mother's and

his father's death, of his adoption by his uncle, and of the travail of soul in which he sought for the clearer vision, of his love for "Burd Lucy," and his devotion to the cause of human brotherhood, is told with both power and beauty, and the whole fitly closes with the following lines:—

(xiv.)

"Burd Lucy, who have put your hand in mine,
And laid that head of yours upon my breast ;
Burd Lucy, who have crowned me on the brows
With a fair crown which once I feared to wear ;
We stand together, my beloved, we two,
And front the future with unfearing eyes.
We have not solved the mystery of our world,
But yet have seen the heaving of its breast
With the great love which throbs for aye beneath :
And we trust God and man, and we go on
To live out what we think to be the truth.
We who believe in man, ay, and in men ;
We who would work as if upon our work
Hung the supremest issue ; and would wait
As if our patience had the key of heaven.
We who have clasped this faith unto our hearts,
God never wastes, but only spends ; although
Man's eyes unpurged discern not use from waste.
And, for the day which we believe will be,
We love and work for that ; and go in faith
That He who comes will come, whate'er the time."

To say that with all its earnestness of purpose, its frequent beauty of thought, and its many felicities of expression, its artistic success is not complete, is to say what has been said of all attempts to treat the problems of modern life in the form of "novels in verse," from "Aurora Leigh" downwards.

Suffice it to say, that among such works it takes a high place, and it can hardly be that literature and humanity are not the better for its publication.

ALFRED H. MILES.

LYRICS AND VERSE TALES.

EMILY H. HICKEY.

I,--BELOVED, IT IS MORN.

BELOVED, it is morn !
A redder berry on the thorn,
A deeper yellow on the corn,
For this good day new-born.
Pray, Sweet, for me
That I may be
Faithful to God and thee.

Beloved, it is day !
And lovers work, as children play,
With heart and brain untir'd always :
Dear love, look up and pray.
Pray, Sweet, for me
That I may be
Faithful to God and thee.

Beloved, it is night !
Thy heart and mine are full of light,
Thy spirit shineth clear and white,
God keep thee in His sight !
Pray, Sweet, for me
That I may be
Faithful to God and thee.

II.—“*THANK YOU.*”“*Comme vous êtes bon . . .*”“*Non, je t’aime,
Voilà tout.*”

VICTOR HUGO.

WHY do you thank me, dear ;
Say I am kind ?
Sometimes, alas, I fear
You must be blind.
Say, does the sun give thanks
To the flowers that lift
Glad faces on hedgerow banks
In the light, his gift ?
Are thanks for your right hand meet
When it serves your need ?
Do you ever bless your feet
Because of their speed ?
Do you thank your eyes that see,
Or your ears that hear ?
Then why give thanks to me,
My dear, my dear ?
Do you know that you, yes, you
Are light to mine eyes ?
I love you, love you true—
How otherwise ?
You let me into your heart,
Do you not know ?
You made me of life a part
A while ago.
What matters what I may do,
Or what I may give ?
You know I would die for you,
As for you I live.

Then let me breathe with your breath,
To your need respond,
Till we come to the gates of death
And the strange beyond.

III.—“M.” TO “N.”

HOW sweet are you to me? As sweet
As dewy turf to wayworn feet;
As cooling draught of water given
To lips athirst from morn to even;
As bread and wine at Sacrament
To soul of blessed penitent.

How true are you to me? As true
As swallow to the roadless blue,
When spring hath wakened in his breast
Life's rapture of the brooding west:
Or as the sea in his response
To that still call which is the moon's.

How near are you to me? As near
As to the earth her atmosphere;
As warp to woof where web is wove;
As strength to hope; as light to love;
As my own blood, my flesh, my breath;
As near as life, as near as death.

How far are you from me? As far
As glory of the morning-star
From Lucifer; as far as bliss
Of comradeship from Judas' kiss;
As day from night: indeed, more far
From me than heaven from hell you are.

IV.—HER DREAM.

FOLD your arms around me, Sweet,
As against your heart my heart doth beat.

Kiss me, Love, till it fade, the fright
Of the dreadful dream I dreamt last night.

Oh, thank God, it is you, it is you,
My own love, fair and strong and true.

We two are the same that, yesterday,
Played in the light and tost the hay.

My hair you stroke, O dearest one,
Is alive with youth and bright with the sun.

Tell me again, Love, how I seem
'The prettiest queen of curds and cream.'

Fold me close and kiss me again ;
Kiss off the shadow of last night's pain.

I dreamt last night, as I lay in bed,
That I was old and that you were dead.

I knew you had died long time ago,
And I well recalled the moan and woe.

You had died in your beautiful youth, my sweet ;
You had gone to rest with untired feet ;

And I had prayed to come to you,
To lay me down and slumber too.

But it might not be, and the days went on,
And I was all alone, alone.

The women came so neighbourly,
And kissed my face and wept with me ;

And the men stood still to see me pass,
And smiled grave smiles, and said, '*Poor lass !*'

Sometimes I seemed to hear your feet,
And my grief-numbed heart would wildly beat;
And I stopt and named my darling's name—
But never a word of answer came.
The men and women ceased at last
To pity pain that was of the past;
For pain is common, and grief, and loss;
And many come home by Weeping Cross.
Why do I tell you this, my dear?
Sorrow is gone now you are here.
You and I we sit in the light,
And fled is the horror of yesternight.
The time went on, and I saw one day
My body was bent and my hair was grey.
But the boys and girls a-whispering
Sweet tales in the sweet light of the spring,
Never paused in the tales they told
To say, '*He is dead and she is old.*'
There's a place in the churchyard where, I thought,
Long since my lover had been brought:
It had sunk with years from a high green mound
To a level no stranger would have found:
But I, I always knew the spot;
How could I miss it, know it not?
Darling, darling, draw me near,
For I cannot shake off the dread and fear.
Hold me so close I scarce can breathe;
And kiss me, for, lo, above, beneath,
The blue sky fades, and the green grass dries,
And the sunshine goes from my lips and eyes.
O God—that dream—it has not fled—
One of us old, and one of us dead!

V.—A SEA STORY.

SILENCE. A while ago
Shrieks went up piercingly ;
But now is the ship gone down ;
Good ship, well manned, was she.
There's a raft that's a chance of life for one,
This day upon the sea.

A chance for one of two ;
Young, strong, are he and he,
Just in the manhood prime,
The comelier, verily,
For the wrestle with wind and weather and wave
In the life upon the sea.

One of them has a wife
And little children three ;
Two that can toddle and lisp ;
And a suckling on the knee ;
Naked they'll go and hunger sore,
If he be lost at sea.

One has a dream of home,
A dream that well may be ;
He never has breathed it yet ;
She never has known it, she.
But some one will be sick at heart,
If he be lost at sea.

" Wife and kids and home !—
Wife, kids nor home has he !—
Give us a chance, Bill ! " Then,
" All right, Jem ! " Quietly
A man gives up his life for a man,
This day upon the sea.

William Canton.

1845.

WILLIAM CANTON was born in the Island of Chusan, off the coast of China, in the year 1845, but the greater part of his childhood was spent in Jamaica, which, while still a boy, he left for France, where he received his education. In Jamaica the scenery of the Blue Mountains awoke in him the love of nature; in France the sudden discovery of a cromlech in a corn-field inspired him with a passion for antiquity, and both enthusiasms give to his work much of its peculiar quality and charm. His education completed, he engaged in miscellaneous literary and educational work, accepting a post on the staff of the *Glasgow Herald*. While thus engaged he published his volume "A Lost Epic and other Poems" (1887).

There are few single-volume poets of our time whose work is so obviously distinguished by solidity and variety of intellectual interest as that of Mr. Canton. It is this distinction which differentiates him. Many of our versifiers have imagination, fancy, fluency, and music; but these things constitute the sum total of their endowment, and we feel the want of some substance behind. Mr. Canton has plenty to say. His poems are rich in art, but they are also rich in knowledge, in thought, in observation, in large experience of life. When "Through the Ages:

a Legend of a Stone Axe" was originally published in the *New Quarterly Magazine*, Professor Huxley noted it with admiring interest as the first attempt that had been made to use "the raw material of science" as a subject for poetry. Not only in this poem, however, but in many others, we feel the presence of the true scientific spirit. The poet feels the demands of the soul; he feels also the claim of the observed fact; and he strives after a reconciliation between them that shall have the satisfaction not merely of comfort but of truth. In the remarkable sonnet-sequence "The Latter Law," he tells how when he had ceased to yearn for his "lost Eden," and "knew no loving spirit brooded in the blue," he found solace in the discovery that "the stern new Law" revealed "Romance more rare than poetry creates"; that

"All things, now whole, have parts of many been,
And all shall be. A disk of Homer's blood
May redden a daisy on an English lawn,
And what was Chaucer glimmer in the dawn
To-morrow o'er the plains where I have stood."

The longing for personal immortality had vanished; of what use were it if "Plato, Hypatia, Shakespeare had surceased . . . and God were but a mythos of the sky?"

"And when I thought, o'ershadowed with strange awe,
How Christ was dead—had ceased in utter woe,
With that great cry 'Forsaken!' on the cross,
I felt at first a sense of bitter loss,
And then grew passive, saying, 'Be it so!
'Tis one with Christ and Judas. 'Tis the law!'"

So far the questions are answered, and the questioner is at least resigned.

" But when my child, my one girl-babe lay dead —
The blossom of me, my dream and my desire—
And unshed tears burned in my eyes like fire,
And when my wife subdued her sobs, and said—
Oh, husband, do not grieve, be comforted,
She is with Christ ! I laughed in my despair.
With Christ ! O God ! and where is Christ, and where
My poor dead babe ? And where the countless dead ?
The great glad Earth—my kin—is glad as though
No child had ever died ; the heaven of May
Leans like a laughing face above my grief.
Is *she* clean lost for ever ? How shall I know ?
O Christ ! art Thou still Christ ? And shall I pray
For fulness of belief or unbelief ? "

Much of Mr. Canton's most winning work is to be found in the sections headed " Wayside Vignettes " and " Poems of Childhood." To nature-lovers and to child-lovers his verse will make a special appeal, as it expresses their own emotion as they would express it if they could, and testifies to an intimacy of knowledge which few of them can boast. This is specially of the nature-poems ; few indeed of the singers of our generation have reaped so rich a harvest of a quiet eye as that stored in a granary of Mr. Canton's single volume. It is not that he finds or even seeks the unfamiliar, but that he renders the familiar—which is too often the neglected—with such single-eyed veracity, that a reflection in still water, a crow perched a-top of a naked tree, a stretch of meadow-land in early summer dawn, seems a thing of beauty, that is as new as it is beautiful. To him it may indeed be said, that the common pebble in virtue of its very commonness, is dearer than the rare gem ; as he himself has written,

" Use teaches thankfulness a sinful thrift ;
We prize the casual, slight the constant gift."

The "Poems of Childhood" speak everywhere the love and delight and wonder which inform the opening of the lovely "Laus Infantium."

"In praise of little children I will say
God first made man, then found a better way
For woman, but his third way was the best.
Of all created things the loveliest
And most divine are children. Nothing here
Can be to us more gracious or more dear.
And though when God saw all his works were good
There was no rosy flower of babyhood,
'Twas said of children in a later day
That none could enter Heaven save such as they."

The following selections are inevitably made from Mr. Canton's shorter poems, by which he is pleasingly though inadequately represented. Of this simpler work of his, "Woodland Windows," into which both children and nature find their way, is a charming example :—

"Where tall green elm-trees in a row
Their boughs in Gothic arches pleach,
Two foliage-fretted lancets show
A warm blue sky, a summer beach.

One lancet holds a sunset sky,
And, where the glossy ripple rolls,
An old man hanging nets to dry
In brown loops from the trestled poles,

And one, a patch with wild flowers gay,
A shoal where green sea-ribbons float,
And two bright sunburnt tots at play
Beside an upturned fishing-boat.

Within the woodland's pillared shade,
I seem from some dim aisle to see
That shore by whose blue waters played
The little lads of Zebedee."

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

POEMS.

1887.

WILLIAM CANTON.

I.—THE CROW.

WITH rakish eye and plenished crop,
Oblivious of the farmer's gun,
Upon the naked ash-tree top
The Crow sits basking in the sun.

An old ungodly rogue, I wot !
For, perched in black against the blue,
His feathers, torn with beak and shot,
Let woful glints of April through.

The year's new grass, and, golden-eyed,
The daisies sparkle underneath,
And chestnut-trees on either side
Have opened every ruddy sheath.

But doubtful still of frost and snow,
The ash alone stands stark and bare,
And on its topmost twig the Crow
Takes the glad morning's sun and air.

II.—A DESERTED GARDEN.

A HIGHROAD white with the dust of May;
An old red wall, and an iron gate ;
A scent of Spring-time : a blossomy spray,
Thrown over and bowed by the blossom's weight

An empty house, and a garden-ground
That no one tended ! The flowering trees
Had grown half wild. With a revel of sound
The birds in flocks made merry at ease.

The gravelled pathways were blurred with green ;
The flower-beds each into other had run ;
'Twas all one ferment of colour and sheen,
And scent and song, in the glittering sun.

And yet the place had a rueful look
For lack of laughter and pattering feet ;
The fruit-tree shadowed no maiden's book ;
No greybeard dozed on the garden-seat.

Methought I saw, as I gazed within,
An idyl of youth with its bliss and pain—
The empty house of "what might have been"—
The garden of dreams that were dreamed in vain.

III.—DAY-DREAMS.

BROAD August burns in milky skies,
The world is blanched with hazy heat ;
The vast green pasture, even, lies
Too hot and bright for eyes and feet.

Amid the grassy levels rears
The sycamore against the sun
The dark boughs of a hundred years,
The emerald foliage of one.

Lulled in a dream of shade and sheen,
Within the clement twilight thrown
By that great cloud of floating green,
A horse is standing, still as stone.

He stirs nor head nor hoof, although
The grass is fresh beneath the branch ;
His tail alone swings to and fro
In graceful curves from haunch to haunch.

He stands quite lost, indifferent
To rack or pasture, trace or rein ;
He feels the vaguely sweet content
Of perfect sloth in limb and brain.

IV.—LOVE AND LABOUR.

AT noon he seeks a grassy place
Beneath the hedgerow from the heat ;
His wife sits by, with happy face,
And makes his homely dinner sweet.

Upon her lap their baby lies,
Rosy and plump and stout of limb—
With two great blue unwinking eyes
Of stolid wonder watching him.

The trees are swooning in the heat ;
No bird has heart for song or flight ;
The fiery poppy in the wheat
Droops, and the blue sky aches with light.

He empties dish, he empties can ;
He coaxes baby till she crows ;
Then rising up a strengthened man,
He blithely back to labour goes.

His hammer clinks through glare and heat—
With little thought and well content
He toils and splits for rustic feet
Fragments of some old continent.

Homeward he plods, his travail o'er,
Through sunset lanes, past fragrant farms,
Till—glimpse of heaven !—his cottage-door
Frames baby in her mother's arms.

V.—*ANY FATHER.*

WE talked of you ; in happy dreams
Our hearts foretold you,
O little Blossom !
And yet how marvellous it seems
To see and hold you !
We guessed you boy, we guessed you maid,
Right glad of either ;
How like, how unlike all we said,
Upon her knee there,
You lie and twit us,
O little Blossom !

VI.—*ANY MOTHER.*

SO sweet, so strange—so strange, so sweet
Beyond expression,
O little Blossom !
To sit and feel my bosom beat
With glad possession ;
For you are ours, our very own,
None other's, ours ;
God made you of *our* two hearts alone,
As God makes flowers
Of earth and sunshine,
O little Blossom !

VII.—*A PHILOSOPHER.*

YES, you may let them creep about the rug.
And stir the fire ! Aha ! that's bright and snug.
To think these mites—ay, nurse, unfold the screen !—
Should be as ancient as the Miocene ;

That ages back beneath a palm-tree's shade
These rosy little quadrupeds have played,
Have cried for moons or mammoths, and have blacked
Their faces round the Drift Man's fire—in fact,
That ever since the articulate race began
These babes have been the joy and plague of man !

Unnoticed by historian and sage,
These bright-eyed chits have been from age to age
The one supreme majority. I find
Mankind hath been their slaves, and womankind
Their worshippers ; and both have lived in dread
Of time and tyrants ; toiled and wept and bled,
Because of some quaint elves they called their own.
Had little ones in Egypt been unknown,
No Pharaoh would have had the power, methinks,
To pile the Pyramids or carve the Sphinx.

Take them to bed, nurse ; but before she goes
Papa must toast his little woman's toes.
Strange that such feeble hands and feet as these
Have sped the lamp-race of the centuries !

VIII.—SUSPIRIUM.

THESE little shoes !—How proud she was of these !
Can you forget how, sitting on your knees,
She used to prattle volubly, and raise
Her tiny feet to win your wondering praise ?
Was life too rough for feet so softly shod,
That now she walks in Paradise with God,
Leaving but these—whereon to dote and muse—
These little shoes ?

IX.—BIRTH AND DEATH.

SHE came to us in storm and snow—
The little one we held so dear—
And all the world was full of woe,
And war and famine plagued the year ;
And ships were wrecked and fields were drowned,
And thousands died for lack of bread ;
In such a troubled time we found
That sweet mouth to be kissed and fed.

But oh, we were a happy pair,
Through all the war and want and woe ;
Though not a heart appeared to care,
And no one even seemed to know.

She left us in the blithe increase
Of glowing fruit and ripening corn,
When all the nations were at peace,
And plenty held a brimming horn—
When we at last were well to do,
And life was sweet, and earth was gay ;
In that glad time of cloudless blue
Our little darling passed away.

And oh, we were a wretched pair
In all the gladness and the glow ;
And not a heart appeared to care,
And no one even seemed to know.

Louisa S. Guggenberger.

1845.

MRS. GUGGENBERGER, better known to the public by her maiden name, Louisa Sarah Bevington, was born in the year 1845. Her father, Alexander Bevington, was of Quaker family, an ancestor of his, when but a boy of fourteen, suffering confinement in Nottingham Gaol with George Fox. Mrs. Guggenberger is the eldest of a family of eight, seven of whom were girls. Her father encouraged her in the observation and love of nature, and at a very early age she wrote childish verses about natural objects. It was not, however, until childhood had been left behind that she made use of verse for the expression of her own thought, though she is said to have had a love for science, poetry, music, and metaphysical thinking even in pinafore days. Her first published verses were three sonnets which appeared in the *Friends' Quarterly Examiner* in 1871, about which time she began writing prose essays on speculative subjects, ethical and metaphysical. The evolutionist view of the universe grew upon her, appealing to her intellect, and firing her imagination, as well as securing the enthusiastic assent of her æsthetic sense and moral being. This found expression in her verse. Encouraged by trusted literary advisers, Miss Bevington made up her mind to follow a literary career, wrote some philosophical essays,

and in 1876 printed some of her poems for private circulation. Mr. Herbert Spencer caused four of these poems—"Morning," "Afternoon," "Twilight," and "Midnight"—to be reprinted in the *Popular Science Monthly* in America under the title "Teachings of a Day." In 1879 all the poems privately printed were reprinted, together with others, in a volume called "Keynotes," which found fame chiefly in scientific circles. Professor Ray Lankester brought it under the notice of Darwin, who read it after not having opened a volume of verse for fifteen years. Two articles written for the *Nineteenth Century* this same year (1879), refuting from a scientific standpoint the cynical pessimism of Mallock's "Is Life Worth Living?" procured the writer some literary recognition and many literary friends both in England and America. Two essays followed respectively on "Determinism and Duty" and "The Personal Aspects of Responsibility" which appeared in *Mind* (the Psychological Quarterly); and in 1881, at the suggestion of Mr. Herbert Spencer, an article in the *Fortnightly* in defence of evolutionist morality. In 1882 Miss Bevington's second volume of verse appeared under the title "Poems, Lyrics, and Sonnets," a volume which found less favour in scientific, and more favour in literary, circles. Shortly after the publication of this volume she visited Germany, and in 1883 married Ignatz Guggenberger, a Munich artist. After her marriage Mrs. Guggenberger contributed occasional articles on different subjects to various magazines, and in 1891 the evolution chapter to the Ethical Society's enlarged edition of the "Religious Systems of the World." Mrs. Guggenberger resided for some time at Meran, afterwards removing to

London. She has for years been an enthusiastic "anarchist," and has shown high hope and deep devotion in the cause.

It is not surprising that Mrs. Guggenberger should have broken the spell which for fifteen years had confined Darwin to the world of prose, for her part is emphatically that of the poetess of evolutionary science. She has discerned more accurately than many contemporaries, the immense poetical development which the acceptance of the evolutionary view has made possible for science, and her best poems are attempts, by no means feeble or unskilful, to bring out the poetic significance of scientific principles. She has also abundance of human feeling and passion, which find expression in poems having other than a scientific basis, and though the structure of her verse is artless, her diction is clear and vigorous. The following "Summer Song" may serve to illustrate her free lyrical movement :—

"Sing! sing me a song that is fit for to-day,
Sing me a song of the sunshine, a warm sweet lay,
Blue larkspur, and bold white daisies, and odour of hay.

Breathe: breathe into music a summer-day tune,
Learnt of the bloom-heavy breezes and honey of noon,
Full of the scent, and the glow, and the passion of June.

You shall sit in the shadow to learn it, just under the
trees;

You shall let the wind fan you and kiss you, and hark to
the bees,

You shall live in the love-laden present, and dream at
your ease.

And skylarks shall trill all in concert up, up in the blue,
And the bee and the lazy-winged butterfly dance to it too,
While you sing me a song of the summer that's ancient
and new."

Mrs. Guggenberger has also attempted the stricter forms of verse, the *villanelle* and the *sonnet*, of which latter form we may quote the following, which is entitled "Love's Depth":—

"Love's height is easy scaling ; skies allure ;
Who feels the day-warmth needs must find it fair ;
 Strong eagles ride the lofty sunlit air,
Risking no rivals while their wings endure.
Yet is thy noblest still thy least secure,
 And failing thee—shall then thy love despair ?
 Shall not thy heart more holily prepare
Some depth unfathomable,—perfect-pure ?
Say that to thee there come love's dreadful call
 The downward swiftness of thy Best to see ;
 Say that he sin or sicken, what of thee ?
Are thine arms deeper yet to stay his fall ?
 Scarcely love's utmost may in heaven be ;
To hell it reacheth so 'tis love at all."

Her chief defects are the over-facility common to so many poetesses, and a deficient perception of the humorous. Of the qualities of her best work the following examples bear witness.

ALFRED H. MILES.

KEY NOTES.

1879.

LOUISA S. GUGGENBERGER.

I.—MORNING.

WHAT'S the text to-day for reading
Nature and its being by ?
There is effort all the morning
Thro' the windy sea and sky.

All, intent in earnest grapple
That the All may let it be :
Force, in unity, at variance
With its own diversity.

Force, prevailing into action,
Force, persistent to restrain,
In a twofold, one-souled wrestle
Forging Being's freedom-chain.

Frolic ! say you—when the billow
Tosses back a mane of spray ?
No ; but haste of earnest effort ;
Nature works in guise of play.

Till the balance shall be even
Swings the to and fro of strife ;
Till an awful equilibrium
Stills it, beats the Heart of Life.

What's the text to-day for reading
Nature and its being by ?
Effort, effort all the morning,
Thro' the sea and windy sky.

II.—AFTERNOON.

PURPLE headland over yonder,
Fleecy, sun-extinguished moon,
I am here alone, and ponder
On the theme of Afternoon.

Past has made a groove for Present,
And what fits it *is*: no more.
Waves before the wind are weighty;
Strongest sea-beats shape the shore.

Just what is is just what can be,
And the Possible is free;
'Tis by being, not by effort,
That the firm cliff juts to sea.

With an uncontentious calmness
Drifts the Fact before the "Law";
So we name the ordered sequence
We, remembering, foresaw.

And a law is mere procession
Of the forcible and fit;
Calm of uncontested Being,
And our thought that comes of it.

In the mellow shining daylight
Lies the Afternoon at ease,
Little willing ripples answer
To a drift of casual breeze.

Purple headland to the westward!
Ebbing tide, and fleecy moon!
In the "line of least resistance,"
Flows the life of Afternoon

III —TWILIGHT.

GREY the sky, and growing dimmer,
And the twilight lulls the sea ;
Half in vagueness, half in glimmer,
Nature shrouds her mystery.

What have all the hours been spent for ?
Why the on and on of things ?
Why eternity's procession
Of the days and evenings ?

Hours of sunshine, hours of gleaming,
Wing their unexplaining flight,
With a measured punctuation
Of unconsciousness, at night.

Just at sunset, was translucence,
When the west was all aflame ;
So I asked the sea a question,
And an answer nearly came.

Is there nothing but Occurrence ?
Though each detail seem an Act,
Is that whole we deem so pregnant
But unemphasized Fact ?

Or, when dusk is in the hollows
Of the hill-side and the wave,
Are things just so much in earnest
That they cannot but be grave ?

Nay, the lesson of the Twilight
Is as simple as 'tis deep ;
Acquiescence, acquiescence,
And the coming on of sleep.

IV.—MIDNIGHT.

THERE are sea and sky about me,
And yet nothing sense can mark ;
For a mist fills all the midnight
Adding blindness to its dark.
There is not the faintest echo
From the life of yesterday :
Not the vaguest stir foretelling
Of a morrow on the way.
'Tis negation's hour of triumph
In the absence of the sun ;
'Tis the hour of endings, ended,
Of beginnings, unbegun.
Yet the voice of awful silence
Bids my waiting spirit hark ;
There is action in the stillness,
There is progress in the dark.
In the drift of things and forces
Comes the better from the worse ;
Swings the whole of Nature upward,
Wakes, and thinks—a universe.
There will be *more* life to-morrow,
And of life, more life that *knows* ;
Though the sum of force be constant
Yet the Living ever grows.
So we sing of evolution,
And step strongly on our ways ;
And we live through nights in patience,
And we learn the worth of days.
In the silence of murk midnight
Is revealed to me this thing :
Nothing hinders, all enables
Nature's vast awakening.

V.—UNFULFILLED.

ERE yet the sunlight caught it where it lay,
I saw a snow-flake vanish utterly ;
I saw a blossom perish on the spray,
Ere yet its petals opened to the bee :
I heard a yearning dissonance to-day
Fail, ere it found its final harmony.

These, symbols : yet—O saddest, and O best
Of Nature's unfulfilments !—one hath passed
Unscarred by any heart-strife to her rest
Who, scarcely fed, gave thanks for life's repast,
And ere love's first full throb had stirred her breast
Praised God for love, and smiling, smiled her last.

Well ! well ! such vanishings are breathings stilled
Ere yet they grew intense, and turned to sighs ;
We curse the stern world-providence that willed
The light away from waking baby-eyes ;
We sing the dirges of the Unfulfilled,
We suffer ; not the innocence that dies.

It dies at our, and not its own expense,
We loved it, for it was exceeding white ;
Who knows ?—strong draughts of utmost sentience
Had left it, fevered, in a lurid night !
Better a thousandfold that, lost to sense,
It lingers yet—the memory of a Light.

POEMS, LYRICS, AND SONNETS.

1882.

LOUISA S. GUGGENBERGER.

I.—BEES IN CLOVER.

A SONG.

UP the dewy slopes of morning
Follow me;
Every smoky spy-glass scorning,
Look and see, look and see
How the simple sun is rising,
Not approving nor despising
You and me.
Hear not those who bid you wait
Till they find the sun's birth-date,
Preaching children, savage sages,
To their mouldy, blood-stuck pages
And the quarrelling of ages,
Leave them all; and come and see
Just the little honied clover,
As the winging music-bees
Come in busy twos and threes
Humming over!
All without a theory
Quite successfully, you see;
Little priests that wed the flowers,
Little preachers in their way,
Through the sunny working day
With their quite unconscious powers
How they say their simple say.
What? a church-bell in the valley?
What? a wife-shriek in the alley?
Tune the bell a little better,
Help the woman bear her fetter.

All in time! all in time!
If you will but take your fill
Of the dawn-light on the hill,
And behold the dew-gems glisten,—
If you turn your soul to listen

To the bees among the thyme,
There may chance a notion to you
To encourage and renew you,
For the doing and the speaking,
Ere the jarring of the chime,
And the mad despair of shrieking
Call you downward to the mending
Of a folly, and the ending

Of a crime.

On the dewy hill at morning

Do you ask?—do you ask?
How to tune the bells that jangle?
How to still the hearts that wrangle?—
For a task?

When the bell shall suit the ears
Of the strong man's hopes and fears,
As the bee-wing suits the clover
And the clover suits the bee,
Then the din shall all be over,
And the woman shall be free,
And the bell ring melody,

Do you see?—do you see?
There are bees upon the hill,
And the sun is climbing still,

To his noon;
Shall it not be pretty soon
That the wife she shall be well,
And the jarring of the bell
Falls in tune?

II.—THE VALLEY OF REMORSE.

THERE goes a wandering soul in desert places ;
(Good Lord, deliver !)

About its way, lie dumb, with livid faces,
Slain virtues and slain hopes in locked embraces ;
(Good Lord, deliver !)

And drear black crags tower from unholy ground
Sheer upward in thick air,
Where breathes no prayer ;
No wind is there,
No sound ;
(Good Lord, deliver !)

And there is no way out, and round and round,
With haggard eye and dragged and staggering paces,
Through years that soul a ghastly circuit traces.
(Good Lord, deliver !)

The sun, all shorn of rays, with lurid fire
Blasts where it strikes : Doom's own red eye of ire :
And all night long is seen unhallowed shimmer,—
Half life, half mire,—
Of things made manifest that should be hid ;
Yet Will is numb that should their play forbid ;
And so they crowd and crawl in gloom and glimmer,
Loathed and unchid ;
And lo ! that soul among them, moving dimmer.
(Good Lord, deliver !)

At the soul's back behold a burden yonder,
A monstrous thing of slime ;
Twopacesforth,—no more,—that Doomed may wander
For all its time ;—

Two wretched paces from the accursed weight.
Bound on by linkèd fate
In glittering cynic chain two steps behind it;
(Good Lord, deliver!)

Such steely bond between
Forbids it breath, save only to remind it
The Past has been,
The Past of sin.
(Good Lord, deliver!)

Ay! just where life is holiest—at the source
Of the soft, ruffled wings,—is chained the curse.
(Good Lord, deliver!)

Those pinions, once all light and wide of feather
That soared right loftily, see, clamped together;
And quivering life is gallèd at the spot,
Sore hurt and hot:
(Good Lord, deliver!)

Yet, chafes that soul rebellious at the tether?
Or, in vain swiftness seeks to flee, the load?
Then heavier fall the blood-drops on the road:—
(Good Lord, deliver!)

The loathèd burden of unburied death
Flies fast as flies that Doomed, or drags as slow;
(Good Lord, deliver!)

Two paces forward ever may it go;
No more; the burden grimly followeth.
There is no freedom here,
Nor any cheer!
(Good Lord, deliver!)

Not lightened yet to skeleton, nor dried,
The load yields horror, horror yet beside;

Fell fumes, half poison and half sustenance,
That hinder life, and hinder deathly trance.
Is there a chance ?

(Good Lord, deliver !)

* * * * *

Three virgin forms came passing by but lately,
Treading the desert boldly and sedately,
Calling it 'beauteous earth,'
Who met this Doomed, and gazed upon it straightly ;
(Good Lord, deliver !)

These saw no burden, so they praised the chain ;
Its treacherous glitter seemed some bauble worn
About the wingèd shoulders to adorn.
(Good Lord, deliver !)

They noted on the path no shocking stain,
So, as the soul made moan,
Knowing no whit of conflict nor of pain,
Deemed it most vain,
And answered in gay tone—
"Now Heaven deliver thee,
Spirit alone !—

Why grievest thou when every bird is singing,
And glad white cloudlets high in ether winging
Brighten e'en sunshine ? Hear the steeples ringing
With marriage mirth !
Behold life blest with love and holiday
While thou art stricken, bent, and wan to see ;
Good Lord, deliver thee !"

All mutely points that soul beyond the chain
Two paces backward ; points in vain, in vain ;—
Who sees not, cannot aid.

Oh, kind, unkindly virgin sympathy !
 Oh, blind, hell-deepening, heavenly mockery !
 What though each maid
 Had pitied had she seen ; not one could see,
 Not one of three.

(Good Lord, deliver !)

They passed, and music with them. Then there came
 Three little children, joying e'en the same,
 Yet sweetlier still. They called the desert "May."

(Good Lord, deliver !)

"Come play with us at play ;
 Blue skies and meadows green are friends to-day ;
 Spread thy good wings, that we may mount thereon
 And seek of all the clouds the whitest one
 To tiptoe on its top toward the sun ;
 And prove whose sight is strongest !
 And who can gaze the longest !
 Our little eyes are clear,—
 Young, but so clear !
 In each of thine there trembles half a tear !
 Ah ! fun !—

We see where thou canst see not ; in the eye
 Of the great golden sun that crowns the sky !"
 (Good Lord, deliver !)

A mother and a father wandered by :
 Hand locked in hand.—"This way the children went,"
 Quoth he, "on some enchanting mischief bent ;
 Behold, their little footprints thickly lie."
 "Bless them !" quoth she : then closer to his side
 Drew shudderingly : "An influence is here,
 Here in the air ; the sunlight seemeth drear ;
 Oh, lead me hence !" and he :
 "'Tis so ; I see a form unmeet to see

Advancing painfully.

Oh, fear !

Lest the sweet babies lingered near the spot,
For something foul doth surely somewhere rot ;
It boots not to know what.
Hence ! spirit dear."

(Good Lord, deliver !)

* * * * *

Maiden and babe and mother have passed by
Scatheless, yet left the doom-glare red and high
Above the blackened valley of all dole,
Nor freed the laden soul.
Crawl, ye foul formless ills ! about your prey ;
Sink, O thrice lost ! forsaken on the way ;
Perish from day !
Since thrice hath passed in vain the innocent,
And hope is long, long spent,
And will is rent.

(Good Lord ! Great God ! deliver ! deliver !)

Lo ! Love comes wandering on the desert way.
Oh, watch ! oh, pray !
Love with the rose-wreath red ?
Ay, love rose-bound !
Ay, love thorn-crowned !
Crowned—bound—with cruel rose-thorns round his
head !

(Good Lord, deliver !)

Love ! love is here ! that knoweth of all pain,
And of the linkèd chain,
And of the stain,
And of the whirling madness, dumb and dread ;
Love ! love is here that knoweth nought in vain !

Dead hope, dead will, oh ! cry
 Aloud ! Love passeth by ;
 Love, that can love dead life to live again !
 (Good Lord, deliver !)

New radiance hallows all the sickened air ;
 For love is here,
 And right and left spring lilies at his nod,
 Blessing the blighted sod,
 For love is here.
 And round the gaunt crags echo of deep prayer
 Is sighing everywhere,—
 Is sighing everywhere !
 For love is here.
 (Deliver ! Lord, deliver !)

Kneels that worn soul, for all the place is holy ;
 Breaks that sore heart, in utterance lost and lowly ;
 “ For Love’s dear sake, great Powers, deliver me !
 O Love, deliver me ! ”

* * * * *

A little bird sweet twitters in a tree ;
 A little breeze comes coolly from the sea ;
 And broad the dawn-light widens o’er the lea.

III.—AT SABBATH DAWN.

SIX times the sun has hotly lit
 A smoke-wreathed scene of care,
 To-day the dust of toil is laid,
 And children are at prayer.

Six times has tempest swept my soul,
 And now I gladly spend
 A time of quietness with you,
 My patient, faithful friend.

There have been noons of warmer blaze,
And midnights meteor-lit—
But never this most plac'd heaven,
With heart-peace under it.

There have been throbs of stronger bliss,
Yet is your presence best ;
Safe in your firm and quiet hand
My hasty pulses rest.

For fiercely tides of life have flow'd
And ebb'd, alas ! too fast,
Breathless and spent, I cast me down
On tideless shores at last.

I do not ask if this be love,
I know it to be rest ;
The sabbath of my life has dawned,
And I am very blest.

IV.—AM I TO LOSE YOU?

“AM I to lose you now ?” The words were light ;
You spoke them, hardly seeking a reply,
That day I bid you quietly “Good-bye,”
And sought to hide my soul away from sight.
The question echo'd, dear, through many a night,—
My question, not your own—most wistfully ;
“Am I to lose him ?”—asked my heart of me ;
“Am I to lose him now, and lose him quite ?”

And only you can tell me. Do you care
That sometimes we in quietness should stand
As fellow-solitudes, hand firm in hand,
And thought with thought and hope with hope compare ?
What is your answer ? Mine must ever be,
“I greatly need your friendship : leave it me.”

George Barlow.

1847.

MR. GEORGE BARLOW was born June 19th, 1847, in Great George Street, Westminster. He is the son of Mr. George Barnes Barlow, master of the Crown Office, and was educated at Harrow and Exeter College, Oxford. His first volume, "Poems and Sonnets," was published in 1871, while he was still at college. This was followed by "A Life's Love" (1873), "Under the Dawn" (1875), "The Two Marriages" (1878), "Through Death to Life" (1878), "Marriage before Death" (1878), "Song Bloom" (1881), "Song Spray" (1882), "An Actor's Reminiscences and Other Poems" (1883), "Poems Real and Ideal" (1884), a Love trilogy, including "Love's Offering" (1883), "An English Madonna" (1884), and "Loved beyond Words" (1885), "The Pageant of Life" (1888), and "From Dawn to Sunset" (1890), and several other volumes.

Mr. Barlow is a poet with an undoubted lyrical gift and a facility in its use which is responsible for a great deal. Like many another writer, he would have stood higher as a poet if he had written less. Fluency always means weakness when it is not directed by even judgment and held in wise restraint; and there is abundant evidence in Mr. Barlow's work that in words and measures he has horses that are apt to run away

with him, to the peril of the chariot he rides. "The Pageant of Life," miscalled an epic, contains a number of poems on a variety of themes, written in lyric form. Many of these, especially the shorter ones, are sweet and pathetic expressions of natural feeling; and if we cannot accept Mr. Barlow as the interpreter of mysteries which profounder men have failed to reveal, we can at least welcome some of these songs as graceful and tender presentations of emotions common to us all. That there are some powerful passages in the more serious numbers of this work, as for instance that entitled "Satan" in Book V., is undoubtedly true: and that in some of the satirical dialogues of Book III. the poet passes far beyond the limits of good sense and good taste can hardly be gainsaid. And yet, taking away all that can thus be deprecated, there remains in this book and in the "Dawn to Sunset" volume a large body of lyrical work which is without reproach, and which entitles its author to rank among lyrists. Such poems as "The Blue-bells," "The Old Maid," "The Blind Poet," "The Dead Child"—

"She dropped no toys to show the road she went"—

and many others awaken ready response in natural hearts, and are worth much more to humanity than the cynical and superficial remarks of Satan upon things he does not appear to understand. For these reasons we much prefer Mr. Barlow's volume "From Dawn to Sunset," in which he has gathered many of the songs and sonnets of his earlier volumes. In this book there are beyond those we quote from it many poems which will repay perusal.

ALFRED H. MILES.

THE PAGEANT OF LIFE.

1888.

GEORGE BARLOW.

I.—BLUE-BELLS.

“ONE day, one day, I’ll climb that distant hill
And pick the blue-bells there !”
So dreamed the child who lived beside the rill
And breathed the lowland air.
“One day, one day, when I am old I’ll go
And climb the mountain where the blue-bells blow !”
One day ! one day ! The child was now a maid,
A girl with laughing look ;
She and her lover sought the valley-glade
Where sang the silver brook.
“One day,” she said, “love, you and I will go
And reach that far hill where the blue-bells blow !”
Years passed. A woman now with wearier eyes
Gazed towards that sunlit hill.
Tall children clustered round her. How time flies !
The blue-bells blossomed still.
She’ll never gather them ! All dreams fade so.
We live and die, and still the blue-bells blow.

II.—TWO NIGHTS.

LAST night he kissed my hair, and kissed my face,
And laughed, and praised my figure’s supple
grace.
My soul was dazzled as with sudden flame :
Star behind star my sweet star-bridesmaids came :
To-night, to-night,
No soft starlight,
But gloom profound that veils the heaven and sea.

Last night the world was full of light and fire :
Star throbbed to star, and burned with sweet desire.
There was no heaven,—for earth was heaven instead !
No immortality,—for death was dead !

To-night, to-night,
Dead is delight,
And pain awakes and lives eternally.

Last night I thought before God's throne I stood,
And knew, knew once for all, that God was good.
To-night how vast a darkness clothes me round :
I madden for love's footfall. Not a sound !—

Last night, last night,
My love took flight :
Cloud sobs to cloud, and whispers, "Where is he?"

III.—THE OLD MAID.

SHE gave her life to love. She never knew
What other women give their all to gain.
Others were fickle. She was passing true.
She gave pure love, and faith without a stain.

She never married. Suitors came and went :
The dark eyes flashed their love on one alone.
Her life was passed in quiet and content.
The old love reigned. No rival shared the throne.

Think you her life was wasted ? Vale and hill
Blossomed in summer, and white winter came :
The blue ice stiffened on the silenced rill :
All times and seasons found her still the same.

Her heart was full of sweetness till the end.
What once she gave, she never took away.
Through all her youth she loved one faithful friend :
She loves him now her hair is growing grey.

IV.—RETROSPECT.

“O CONQUERING poet, thou that hast
The whole world at thy feet,
What laurel-garlands crown thy past!
Is not the present sweet?”

Poet.

“I’d fling away my crown of bay,
Lose it without one throe,
To feel beside my own to-day
The tender heart I flung away
Long, long ago!”

“O statesman, thou that guidest things
With godlike strength of will,
Thou art more regal than earth’s kings
They hear thee, and are still.”

Statesman.

“I shape the world continually,
I lay its monarchs low,
And yet I’d give the world to see
The dead eyes smile that smiled at me
Long, long ago!”

“O warrior, thou that carriest high
Thy grey victorious head,
What pæans echo to the sky
At thy war-horse’s tread!”

Warrior.

“I heed them not. I long to hear
The child’s speech, soft and slow,
That used to sound upon my ear,
So sweet, so pure, so silver-clear,
Many and many and many a year
Ago!”

V.—THE DEAD CHILD.

BUT yesterday she played with childish things,
With toys and painted fruit.
To-day she may be speeding on bright wings
Beyond the stars! We ask. The stars are mute.
But yesterday her doll was all in all;
She laughed and was content.
To-day she will not answer, if we call:
She dropped no toys to show the road she went.
But yesterday she smiled and ranged with art
Her playthings on the bed.
To-day and yesterday are leagues apart!
She will not smile to-day, for she is dead.

VI.—THE BLIND POET.

WITHIN a humble London room
A poet lived and wrought:
He saw the sweet spring-blossoms bloom
But only in his thought.
His eyes were darkened. But his soul
Had power to see the skies:
Of Nature's lore he read the whole
With his heart's loving eyes.
A thousand spirits walk the earth,
Yet have no power to see:
They miss its sorrow, miss its mirth,
Its beauty. Not so he!
For him the sun was full of light,
And blue the bright sea-wave;
The wind-tost woods returned delight
For music that he gave.

The rosebud in his song was red ;
The sun-kissed hills were green :
The daisy to his door was led,
As proud as any queen !

For to each flower he gave a life
Beyond the life of time,
And by his music made the strife
Of wrestling storms sublime.

* * *

Aye, all hearts loved him. But the dead,
They loved him best, it seems.
They hovered round about his bed,
And drew him through his dreams.

They drew his spirit towards the land
Where all who love shall see.
They took the blind man by the hand :
He followed fearlessly.

They led him from this land of ours,
And promised him a boon :
"Thine eyes shall feast on heavenly flowers,
On heavenly sun and moon ;

"Thou shalt see heavenly stars," they said ;
"Thou shalt breathe heavenly air ;
Thou shalt know rapture 'mid the dead,
Who, living, knewest despair :

"Follow."—He listened to the voice,
And left us here in gloom.

Yet has he made the wiser choice :
He has left his darkened room.

He saw on earth pale ghosts of stars ;
But that dim life is done :
Death bursts his darkness' prison-bars ;
To-day he sees the sun.

VII.—THE POET.

O ARTIST dreaming thus thy life away,
There is a higher life than thou canst guess.
Art thou a poet ? sweet love answers, " nay."

Was Christ a poet ? woman answers, " yes."

The highest poethood is ever this :

To love as Christ loved, and to save the race.
Not to spend wild years, seeking kiss on kiss,
But to draw forth the soul in woman's face.

To aid the weary, and to lift the low :

To show God's pity in the human sphere :
Besought by sorrow, never to say " no " :
To lend the helpless heart a ready ear :

To honour woman, and, if woman slip,

To stand by ready, with strong outstretched hand,
As God sends starlight to the struggling ship,
Or the staunch life-boat pulling from the land :

This is true poethood.—Aye, not to love

The rose the less, but to love virtue more :
Not to love earth less in that, far above,
The poet sees the stars that sail or soar.

Hast thou God's vision ? art thou part of him ?

Can thine eye, steady, mocking at fatigue,
Traverse vast spaces where man's eye grows dim,
Pursuing phantom star-ships, league on league ?

Art thou so near to God thou canst not pray,

Since prayer is offered to a distant form ?
Thy church, heaven's blue dome on a summer day ?
Thy hymns, the staves that thunder through a storm ?

* * * * *

Canst thou see what no common eye can see,
And, penetrating far past space and time,
Be clothed upon with God's eternity—
And, as he made the ebon night sublime
With countless stars, make generations bright
With songs that breathe through ages yet to be
The passionate fragrance of one summer night,
The scent of sea-weed on a mortal sea ?
Then, being more than man in thought and frame,
Be more than man in noble act as well ;
Be poet in thy deeds, not only in name ;
Flash down song's sunshine to the depths of hell.
Thou wilt not reverence Christ ? Be more than he.
He is not jealous. He will stand aside.
Thou hardly carest for God ? He cares for thee ;
And he is greater, having less of pride.
If thou canst light one brief torch, he can light
The watch-fires glimmering through the camps of space
One lyric song perchance thine hand can write :
He writes the Epics of the human race.
And yet he cares for thee.—Be like to him.
Be God, if yet thou dream'st this thing can be.
Drink deep of God's life, let the cup o'er brim.
Deem that thy wine-glass can contain the sea !
Thou wilt not own a Master ? Be thou lord.
So long as thou doest justice, all is well.
Thou hast to slay wrong with a fiery sword :
What Christ's tongue left unspoken, thou must tell.
Yet, stars and suns and sunlike songs above,
Sits the eternal Father, God unseen.
Love is the Father. Be thou perfect love
And thou shalt be God's Son, as Christ has been.

FROM DAWN TO SUNSET.

189c.

GEORGE BARLOW.

I.—“IF ONLY THOU ART TRUE.”

IF only a single Rose is left,
Why should the Summer pine ?
A blade of glass in a rocky cleft ;
A single star to shine.
—Why should I sorrow if all be lost,
If only thou art mine ?

If only a single Bluebell gleams
Bright on the barren heath,
Still of that flower the Summer dreams,
Not of his August wreath.
—Why should I sorrow if thou art mine,
Love, beyond change and death ?

If only once on a wintry day
The sun shines forth in the blue,
He gladdens the groves till they laugh as in May
And dream of the touch of the dew.
—Why should I sorrow if all be false,
If only *thou* art true ?

II.—THEE FIRST, THEE LAST.

BECAUSE thou wast the first
To waken passion's thirst,
When all the morning youthful air was sweet ;
Because, while skies were blue
And fern-fronds fresh with dew,
Thine eyes were morning's eyes for me to meet,
Thy name first, last, in song-land I repeat.

Because the seas were fair
With breath of morning air,—
Because enchanted sunlight filled the bays ;
Because in vale and dell
Young spring-like petals fell
And dreams were sweet in many a woodland maze
Thee first, thee last, in song to heaven I raise.

Because the woods were green,
Because thou wast my queen
Long ere pale Sorrow haunted with sad eyes
The autumn desolate rills,
And thunder-smitten hills,
And wild moors which the purple-heather dyes,
Song's light outlives the sunshine of the skies.

Because thou wast my Bride,
Young, beautiful, soft-eyed,
Long ere the voice of other woman spoke ;
Because thou wast the flower
First sent in life's first hour,
White as the seas that round our footsteps broke,
Both first and last I bow me to thy yoke.

Because no woman's face
Had, then, the same sweet grace,
Nor had the eyes of woman magic then
To lead astray my heart ;
Because the crown of Art
Thou wast, and my life's mission among men
Thou madest plain, I hymn thee, love, again.

I hymn, sweet lady, thee,
With voice of our old sea,
With passionate surge of song-wave on the shore
Of fast-receding time ;
I seek thee in my rhyme,
Beautiful, tender as thou wast, once more.
I loved thee in silence. Now my songs adore.

Because in the early glow
Of morning thou didst throw
A glamour o'er my life that never yet
Hath faded quite away,
Though shades of evening grey
Are in the West, and cold years must be met,
Upon thy brow this wreath of song I set.

I bring thee, love, again
A soft memorial strain ;
A memory as of morning o'er the sea :
Pale flowers for thee to wind,
With love-glance flung behind,
Within thy tresses ere swift years that flee
Banish the morning thoughts, and thoughts of me.

Thee first, thee last, I crown
And lay my singing down
Just as of old for blessing of thine hand ;
Again, in dreams, a boy,
Full of love's fiery joy,
Watching the sea-shades of thine eyes I stand,
While miles of meadow-sweet scent all the land.

III.—DEATH.

THE mantle of a vast exceeding peace
Over the lonely wandering poet fell :
The noises of the worldly war did cease,
And all was well.

Some understood him better, now that death
Had folded round him its embrace secure,
And breathed upon him with its awful breath,
Most sweet, most pure.

The women who had followed through wild ways
With love and longing in most tender hands,
Brought him his roses and his wreath of bays,
Plucked in lone lands.

But over him fell sweet unbroken sleep,
And rest divine that nought could change or mar ;
One woman watched his grave with great grand deep
Gaze like a star.

Nought moved her from his grave. His other queens
Sought other pleasures—bought and sold and slept
But still, where over him the grey stone leans,
This woman wept.

They found her there one summer morning dead
Beneath the solemn marriage-sealing sun,
To his live endless deathless spirit wed,—
So these were one.

SONNETS.

GEORGE BARLOW.

I.—SONNET: THE POET'S MISSION.

BE gentle with me ; for thou knowest not yet
The utter need there is in me of love.

Oh ! though the poets' brows, bay-crowned above,
Shine famously,—look close, their eyes are wet.
The sorrow of all the earth God's hand has set
Upon them for a wreath,—and in strange fashion
To understand in soul earth's every passion :
For this it is that earth is in their debt.

What the slow heartless lover cannot feel,
The poet feels for him ; and tear-drops steal
Adown his cheeks when others cannot sorrow.
What wonder then if sometimes in his heart
There is a yearning he cannot impart,
And sweet would seem a night without a morrow !

II.—THE FINAL LONELINESS.

IF God be dead, and Man be left alone,
And no immortal golden towers be fair,
And nothing sweeter than earth's summer air
Can ever by our yearning hearts be known ;
If every altar now be overthrown,
And the last mistiest hill-tops searched and bare
Of Deity,—if Man's most urgent prayer
Is just a seed-tuft tossed about and blown :—
If this be so, yet let the lonely deep
Of awful blue interminable sky
Thrill to Man's kingly unbefriended cry :
Let Man the secret of his own heart keep
Sacred as ever ;—let his lone soul be
Strong like the lone winds and the lonelier sea.

C. C. Fraser Tytler.

(Mrs. Edward Liddell.)

1848.

MRS. EDWARD LIDDELL, perhaps better known as C. C. Fraser Tytler, published in 1881 a small volume of poems entitled "Songs in Minor Keys." This volume soon reached a second edition, and we might almost have expected, as we could certainly have hoped, that the reception of the first might have encouraged the issue of a second volume, but it has not been so, and at the time of this writing the "Songs in Minor Keys" remains Mrs. Liddell's one published volume of poetic work.

The qualities of this volume are well illustrated by the poems given in the following pages:—"Absolution" is a sweet story of English lovers parted by circumstances, yet cherishing the old love, and meeting again after years of separation at the confessional where the woman confesses the wrong she does her husband and children by cherishing the memory of the old, far, happy time. The story, which is simple in its construction, is told with a pathos and beauty which makes even its sadness sweet, and irresistibly enkindles the sympathy of the reader for those whom love unites but fate divides. The passage in which the unconscious penitent, "all unknowing yet all known,"

concludes her confession rises to a high point of dramatic interest and power :—

“Stay! there is one strain more. If I should see
His face again—on this side of the grave,
My God! and if he called me, ‘Will you come?’
I sometimes think I should not choose but go!
Pray for me, Father—I have told you all.
But God is gracious—do not you be hard—
But answer, Father, and then shrive me so!”

“The Highland Glen” is another pathetic story, told in dialect by an old Scotch wife, who cheers herself amid the smoky surroundings of an old Scotch town by thoughts of the Highland Glen in which she spent her happy youth.

“But for the bonny glen my heart cries sair,
I dream I’m standing kneec-deep in the burn;
I see the rowans noddin’ over head,
I hear the mavis sing aboon the fern.”

“Naomi” touches another phase of home sorrow, and with the same true and tender hand, a hand gifted with the “touch of Nature” which never fails to find the key-note of human interest, and finds it, by reason of its greater sensitiveness, oftenest in the minor scale. And yet, as Mr. Hall Caine has remarked, “although the atmosphere of the book is distinctly an atmosphere of sadness,” it is “not of sadness prolonged until it becomes painful, but brightened by hope, and losing nothing of its natural effect from an undue dwelling on the night side of nature. The devotional pieces have sometimes a power that recall Christina Rossetti (‘Thou too hast Suffered’ is a beautiful exposition of ascetic passion), while the descriptive passages have an autumnal sweetness that reminds us occasionally of Mrs. Webster.”

ALFRED H. MILES.

SONGS IN MINOR KEYS.

1884.

C. C. FRASER TYTLER.

(MRS. EDWARD LIDDELL.)

I.—ABSOLUTION.

TWO loved a few years since, and read anew
The mysteries of God ; and earth and sky
Were but reflections of a great I AM,
Whose name was Love : for Love is God, they said,
And thought it were the same as God is Love.

So they smiled on in a large land of smiles,
Where, as of old, the blind man with half-sight
Saw men as trees before him : and their feet
Went airily along on untouched earth,
And birds were angels, and to love was life.
And with the eyes of children that first see,
And know it, so they saw and wondered much
How they had ever lived so blind before.

And then the real awakening came—the day
When, children still, they learned to see beyond
The mazy borders of the land of Love ;
Saw more than men as trees, and learnt to know
The harder after-lesson of “ I feel.”

All life not fair—all men not true ; some hard,
And some as pitiless as hail from heaven.
And a gaunt figure called the World strode up,
And came between them, and the gods of earth
Lift up themselves and asked for human hearts,
And theirs were offered on the golden shrine.

They parted, as the old tales run ; and none
But God and such as part can tell the woe
Of the long days that moaned themselves away
Like billows beating on a sandy shore,
Whose song is ever of long Death and Time—
For ever breaking their full hearts, and still
Upgathering all the weight of woe again
To break for ever. But billows that are tired
Sink down at last into a patient calm,
Seeing their breaking fruitless. And so she,
Wed to another, with the child she bore
Rocked her old sorrow into fitful sleep,
And prayed the Holy Mother bless the child
And keep him safe, heart-whole from love and grief.

So many years rolled by : when on a day
The sun of warmer countries beating strong
Upon the Roman's city, filled the dome
Of Peter as with fire from God. And there
Within, alone in that great solitude,
Keeping his watch for any lambs might seek
There to be shriven of their sins and set
Anew upon the highway of their God,
A priest, unseen, with his long wand outstretched.
Silence reigned speaking. And to his heart and God
The Father spake. When, lo, there swayed far off
The outer curtain, and there came the tread
Of swift light feet along the marble floor.
A woman, fair with beauty of full life ;
Girlish in all her movements, yet with pain
Of Holy Mother by the Holy Rood
On the sweet face from which she cast the veil
And looked about her. But the beckoning wand
Called to her mutely—and she paused and knelt.

“ Father, canst understand my English tongue ?
Yea ! then I thank my God, for I am sad,
And burthened so with sin, I cannot walk
With head erect among my fellow-men,
And I am stranger here, and would confess.

“ Father, it was no sin ; it seemed not so
When it was near me, in that time long past ;
But good thoughts, held beyond their time, are sin,
And good thoughts asked of us by God may turn
To foul corruption if we hold them here.
Listen to me. A long, long time gone by
I loved. Start not. My love was free ; no chain
Bound me to suffer. All the world was mine,
And over it there flushed the rosy light
Of a first love—God knows how true and pure
Father, a love that holy men like you
Need never shrink from. Such a love, as but
To taste the blessedness of loving so
Were heaven on earth. But then to hear and see
He loved me was a tale too great, too dear,
For mortal heart to bear alone, and beat.
And so God thought to make us one—for I
Had died, but that his heart could share with me
In part the joyfulness, the too-much bliss.

“ Father, when just my weaker soul had grown
To lean its fulness on him—when the times
And seasons passed unseen, because that I
Felt only constant summer by my side—
Then—they came between us. Had he died
He still was mine hereafter. Christ Himself
Has His own bride, the Church. But I was wed,
And he passed from me to I know not where.

“Father, the years have passed. I thought that I
Had learnt so well the lesson—to forget.
But Memory listens, as a wakeful child,
And all the more the watcher bids him sleep,
He opens wide his eyes, and makes reply,
And will not sleep for bidding. It is so,
Father, with me. And in my children’s eyes
I see reproaches; and their baby-hands
That wreath me seem to say, ‘You are not true,
Not a true mother, for your life is past:
You only love us somewhere in a dream.’

“Father, he lives—my husband. And his love
Speaks too reproaches. For when he can smile,
I cannot, as good wives should do, smile back,
And lie myself to gladness. I turn there,
My God! to those long days have burnt their brand
Into my heart. When I could live: before,—
O Father! that ‘before!’—that great, great gulf
That yawns between us! Ah, I hear you start!
Did you speak, Father? I am vile, but now
Shrive me—I dare not take my load away!

“Stay! there is one stain more. If I should see
His face again—on this side of the grave,
My God! and if he called me, ‘Will you come?’
I sometimes think I could not choose but go!
Pray for me, Father—I have told you all.
But God is gracious—do not you be hard—
But answer, Father, and then shrive me so!”

There was a long, long silence as she knelt.
And then, at length, a voice as of the wind
Moaning a little in a wooded place,
Came to her softly.

“ Daughter, be thou still
And patient. It is the great God’s will.
I, too, have suffered : had a love like thine,
But long, long since have laid its fetters by.
Daughter, go home. It were not well to stay
Longer in this blest place—we two—alone.
I shrive thee so—from sin ! Pray thou for me,
As I for thee. In heaven—hereafter—
Who knows ?—I yet may speak with thee again ! ”

She moved, she rose, and passed forth from the place,
With heart made gladder. And the curtain fell,
As the soft footsteps on the marble died.

It was the silence only and his God
That heard a moan beyond the outstretched wand :
A long, long sigh, as of a spirit fled.
And then, in broken whispers, came at length :

“ Into Thy hands, my God ! the gate is past—
Death hath no longer sting, and Life hath nought
For me to fear or shrink from any more.
My God, I thank Thee ! Thine the power, the might,
That held my breath, and made me more than man !
If I have suffered my full meed of pain,
Let me go hence ! And on the other side
Show me Thy Bride ! that I may fill my soul
And have no aching there—nor any part
In looking earthwards—back to earthly things ! ”

That night in Rome a heavy bell tolled slow
In convent walls. And cowlèd brothers prayed
For Brother Francis, entered into rest.

II.—THE HIGHLAND GLENS.

I N a dull cobwebbed street of a Scotch town
I knew a woman once—she died last year—
The poorest, humblest of God's creatures, she
Had the great secret, and was happy here.
Her birth was Highland. As a comely girl—
She often told the tale—her lad had come,
And out of the deep glen between the hills
Had brought her with him to his city home.
“I laid my head upon the kist,” she'd say,
“When we was merried, and the time drew on
For me to say farewell to all my folk
To gae wi' him the strange new way alone.
“‘Hout, tout,’ said Jean, ‘I niver seed the like,
I niver seed you take on so before ;
Rise up, rise up, the goodman's waitin' you ;
All these unclever ways 'll vex him sore !’
“‘But still I cried upon the kist,’ she'd say,
Till Jamie came and led me right awa'.
It's a dour pleasin' is a wedding-day,
Wi' two strong loves a-pu'ing you in twa.
“The bonny glen, the wee wee burnie's face
I couldn't say farewell wi'out a tear ;
The hills and a' the flowers were wide awake
On thon sweet mornin' o' the youngling year.
“Maybe I think on these a great deal more,
Now that the dear ones a' are gone to rest.
That day I moaned like dove about her brood,
As I lay sobbin' on my mither's breast.
“And oh for May and Angus—it was sair !
Angus he hung about the place so dull,
And May and me—we never spake at a'
That last long week, when hearts were at the full.

- “ Like some great roses kept agin a show
We durstn’t touch our hearts lest they should break,
So each kept cheery in a cheerless way,
Tried to keep hearty for the other’s sake.
- “ I span a plaid,” she’d say, “ in those old days,
When we were courtin’, my dear lad and I,
I span it green for the dear glen and trees,
I span it blue for God Almighty’s sky ;
- “ I span a twist o’ red to run a’ through,
To show my heart’s blood beating was for him—
You’ll see the plaid upon the bed,” she’d say,
“ Although the bonnie colours are a’ dim.
- “ He wore it till he died. He liked his plaid ;
And he’s been dead and gone these twenty years,
And ever since it’s been upon my bed ;
It’s kept me warm, it’s dried a many tears.
- “ How do I fare ? Oh, I—I fare right weel.
I hae three pound a-year, and only me :
I niver had no bairns ; and when he died,
My man, he greets awhile, and says, says he,
- “ ‘ How’ll you fare, love, all left, and all alone ? ’
I couldn’t answer. But at last says I,
‘ My dear, the God ’as kept us both at once
’ll keep me easy now you’re goin’ on high.’
- “ He’s kept me all along. I’ve got no needs,
There’s room enow in here for only me ;
I has my three pounds regular : and I pays
Into the coal club. I’ve enow for tea ;
- “ Only I need be very moderate. When I make
A cup o’ tea, that’s two, because I swill
The teapot out a second time, ye see ;
Oh, and I fares right well ; I gets my fill.

"No, I don't want for nothin', though you're kind ;
My blankets they are thin—but there's the plaid ;
I gets along right canty—gets to kirk
Now and again on warm days. When I'm sad,

"And that's not often, praise the Lord !—I go
Awhiley down the street ; and at the end
You'll see a tree that's bonny and that's green,
And that poor wee bit town-tree is my friend.

"For in these days, when I'm grown grey and bent,
And a' my kith and kin are gone to God,
My mind keeps turnin' to the glen I left
Forty long years ago. As through a cloud

"The things of later days go daze my brain,
I'm no just clear about the how and when ;
But every stick and stone and bit o' wall
And every cranny in the bonny glen

"Is plain afore me. I can think o' him,
My man, my sister May, and Angus too,
And o' my mither, wi'out e'er a tear—
I know God keeps them that are leal and true.

"But for the bonny glen my heart cries sair,
I dream I'm standin' knee-deep in the burn ;
I see the rowans noddin' overhead,
I hear the mavis sing aboon the fern.

"And when I see the wee bit roomie here,
My man's auld Bible, and my father's crook,
And when I see the plaidie on the bed,
And see them a' through this poor city's smoke,

"I shut my een, and pray the Lord make haste,
Tak' me the shortest road to heaven's stair ;
And 'gin the shortest road were by the glen,
Think you the Lord wad tak' me round by there ?"

III.—THOU TOO HAST SUFFERED.

WHAT have I suffered that Thou hast not borne?
Comes the dear thought when I am spent with pain,
When the slow hours are passing, thought recalls
Thine agony again.

But when the spirit's pinion flags and fails,
Complaining sore I turn rebellious still,
As if Thou also hadst not been downcast
By Cedron's rill.

Bowed with the weight of some dark nameless loss,
Looking around on places death makes void,
Can I forget that Thou didst lose Thy friend,
That Lazarus died?

Yea, but, my Saviour, hear my keener grief,
I lose my friend in God, and say 'tis well;
But to know him, all-trusting, all-betrayed,
Is sorrow's hell!

To know a true love spurned—nay, worse, received
By shallow faithless heart, too false to see,
Full of poor joys, and meaner aims and ends,
Its matchless purity.

Saviour, my God, all else but this I bear,
This fills my cup; hast Thou too suffered this;
Ay more, denied by Thy first friend, and mocked
By Judas' kiss!

Calmed by the thought of what Thyself hast borne,
I turn from what I bear to what may be
The little place where Thou wouldst have me work
Awhile for Thee.

And here, my Lord, I cry—all else I bear,
Since Thou all this hast suffered more than I;
But the deaf ear that will not heed Thy word,
'Gainst this I cry!

The dull indifferent eye behind whose pane
A dull dead world of sense looks blindly out,
While holy things, that stir high souls, are spent
On souls that flout.

How bear the affront, dear Lord, that is for Thee!
Ah, senseless I, forgetting that fair spot
Thou fain hadst gathered to Thy kingly-breast,
But she "would not."

Or that poor country by the still lake's marge
That saw Thee, knew Thy works, yet feared Thy power,
And with mad voice lift up the prayer that drove
Thee forth that hour.

What have I suffered that Thou hast not borne?
One only load is mine Thou couldst not bear,
The burden of a soul so all-unclean,
My sin's despair.

Ah! but e'en this, my God, has been Thy load,
For not my greed and not my guilt alone,
But all the awful burden of all sin
Is still Thine own.

I grieve when men refuse Thy proffered love,
My own dark heart makes dark the world to me;
What is the awful vista of all time,
My Lord, to Thee?

IV.—JESUS THE CARPENTER.

'ISN'T this Joseph's son?'—ay, it is He;
Joseph the carpenter—same trade as me—
I thought as I'd find it—I knew it was here—
But my sight's getting queer.

I don't know right where, as His shed must ha' stood—
But often, as I've been a-planing my wood,
I've took off my hat, just with thinking of He
At the same work as me,

He warn't that set up that He couldn't stoop down
And work in the country for folks in the town ;
And I'll warrant He felt a bit pride, like I've done
At a good job begun.

The parson he knows that I'll not make too free,
But on Sunday I feels as pleased as can be,
When I wears my clean smock, and sits in a pew,
And has thoughts a few.

I think of as how not the parson hissen,
As is teacher and father and shepherd o' men,
Not he knows as much of the Lord in that shed,
Where He earned His own bread.

And when I goes home to my missus, says she,
"Are ye wanting your key?"
For she knows my queer ways, and my love for the shed,
(We've been forty years wed).

So I comes right away by mysen, with the book,
And I turns the old pages and has a good look
For the text as I've found, as tells me as He
Were the same trade as me.

Why don't I mark it? Ah, many says so,
But I think I'd as lief, with your leave let it go :
It do seem that nice when I fall on it sudden—
Unexpected you know !

V.—GOOD-NIGHT.

IT is over now, she is gone to rest ;
I have clasped the hands on the quiet breast.
Draw back the curtain, let in the light,
She will never shrink if it be too bright.

We were two in here but an hour gone by,
No streak was then in the midnight sky ;
Now I am one to watch the day
Come glimmering up from the far away.
What will he say when he comes in,
Waked by the city's morning din,
Hoping to find and fearing to know
The sorrow he left but an hour ago ?
What will he say, who has watched so long,
When he shall find who has come and gone ?
Come a watcher that will not bide
Love's morning or noon or eventide.
He thought to kiss her by morning grey,
But God has thought to take her away.
What will he say ? God knows, not I ;
" Good night," he said, but never " good bye."

VI.—*SONNET: A DAY IN JUNE.*

" Out of heaven from God."

COME down amongst us, and men know it not !
They call it lightly a fine summer's day,
But breathing Nature knows it ; not one spot
But trembles at the knowledge. Every spray
From garden unto forest at its lot
Smiles in the stillness, and the veil away
'Twixt earth and sky, earth's confines are forgot ;
Praise shakes the world, too near its God to pray.
So when the Glory of the Godhead came
Long years ago and trod the paths of men,
They called Him prophet, and His words of flame
The poet's madness. Earth at her Lord's name
Was speechless ; but 'twas hers alone to hide
Her widowed face in darkness, when He died.

Edmund Gosse.

1849.

MR. EDMUND WILLIAM GOSSE is the son of the late Philip Henry Gosse, F.R.S. He was born in London, September 21st, 1849, and educated in Devonshire. In 1867 he was appointed assistant-librarian at the British Museum, and in 1875 translator to the Board of Trade. In the years 1872 and 1874 he visited Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, for the purpose of studying Scandinavian literature; and in 1877 spent some time in Holland on a similar literary quest. He has published "Madrigals, Songs, and Sonnets" (in conjunction with Mr. J. A. Blaikie) (1870); "On Viol and Flute," lyrical poems (1873); "King Erik," a tragedy (1876); "The Unknown Lover," a drama (1878); "New Poems" (1879), and "Firdausi in Exile," and other poems (1886). He wrote the "Masque of Painters," which was performed by the Royal Institute of Painters in Water Colours, May 19th, 1885, and subsequent evenings, with great success. A collected edition of his early poems was published in 1890 under the former title "On Viol and Flute." His chief prose works include "Northern Studies," the result of his continental researches (1879); a "Life of Gray" (1882); followed later by an edition of Gray's works in four volumes; "Seventeenth Century Studies," a contribution to the history of English poetry (1883); a "Life of

Congreve" (1888); a "History of Eighteenth Century Literature" (1889); a "Life of Philip Henry Gosse," the naturalist, his father (1891); a volume of essays, "Gossip in a Library" (1891); and a prose romance, "The Secret of Narcissë" (1892). In 1884-5 Mr. Gosse visited America, lecturing at Harvard, Yale, and elsewhere; on his return he became Clarke lecturer in English Literature at Trinity College, Cambridge (1885-9).

The first thing that strikes one, in face of such a list, and it is far from complete, is the extraordinary industry which has accomplished so much in so short a space of time. Surely this were a sufficient record for a whole lifetime, and yet Mr. Gosse has, presumably, another quarter of a century before him in which to round off the period of his achievements. For ourselves, at least, we may express the hope that during these years of opportunity he will be more the pipe, and less the pen, of the muses. He has already paid the penalty all poets pay who largely occupy themselves with prose. There are those who will never call a man a poet if they can possibly call him anything else, and so it has been said of Mr. Gosse, as it has been said of many others, from Walter Scott to George Meredith, that he is not so much a poet as a prose-writer who affects poetry.

Whatever may be the merits of Mr. Gosse's prose, his poetry is far too excellent to be allowed to remain in the shadow thrown by it. There is surely not one of the poems included in the following selection which can be read without a sense of pleasure, a feeling of music, and a throb of sympathy. "Lying in the Grass" is a beautiful English

pastoral, "full of young blood and tuneful impulse," as Mr. Stedman said of the volume in which it first appeared, and yet showing due restraint, wisdom beyond the years of youth, and the broad sympathy that can hunger for a

"heart in unison with all mankind."

"The Farm," again, another English idyl, full of English feeling and description, broadening into the wider sympathy that can say—

"Nor seems it strange indeed
To hold the happy creed
That all fair things that bloom and die
Have conscious life as well as I ;

"That not in vain arise
The speedwell's azure eyes,
Like stars upon the river's brink,
That shine, unseen of us, and sink ;

"That not for Man is made
All colour, light and shade,
All beauty, ripened out of sight,—
But to fulfil its own delight."

"The Gifts of the Muses" is a classical story, and yet one that is full of human interest. How great a contrast to its prototypes of a hundred years ago ! Here tender sympathy turns poetry into pathos, and delicate manipulation turns pathos into poetry. Of another form, "The Cruise of the *Rover*," a spirited ballad, written in a free flowing measure, is vigorous, picturesque, and full of colour, and irresistibly enkindles the reader's sympathy for the heroes' fate ; albeit, they are but pirates paying the penalty of lawlessness.

"King Erik," which we are unable to quote at length, has some charming scenes and many graceful

passages, and one specially successful lyric which may represent it here:—

“Autumn closes
Round the roses,
Shatters, strips them, head by head;
Winter passes
O'er the grasses,
Turns them yellow, brown and red;
Can a lover
E'er recover
When the summer love is dead?

“Yet the swallow
Turns to follow
In the northward wake of spring,
To refashion
Wasted passion
With a sweep of his dark wing,
As returning
Love flies burning
To these stricken lips that sing!”

Mr. Gosse's poetry is alike faithful to nature and to art. His pictures of pastoral life are English in spirit, colour, and atmosphere; his classical poems, classical in thought, tone, and form. Whether of the one class or the other they show the beating of the sympathetic pulse of true feeling, none the less real because held under wise restraint.

ALFRED H. MILES.

ON VIOL AND FLUTE.

1873

EDMUND GOSSE.

LYING IN THE GRASS.

BETWEEN two golden tufts of summer grass,
I see the world through hot air as through glass,
And by my face sweet lights and colours pass.

Before me, dark against the fading sky,
I watch three mowers mowing, as I lie :
With brawny arms they sweep in harmony.

Brown English faces by the sun burnt red,
Rich glowing colour on bare throat and head,
My heart would leap to watch them, were I dead !

And in my strong young living as I lie,
I seem to move with them in harmony—
A fourth is mowing, and that fourth am I.

The music of the scythes that glide and leap,
The young men whistling as their great arms sweep,
And all the perfume and sweet sense of sleep,

The weary butterflies that droop their wings,
The dreamy nightingale that hardly sings,
And all the lassitude of happy things,

Is mingling with the warm and pulsing blood,
That gushes through my veins a languid flood,
And feeds my spirit as the sap a bud.

Behind the mowers, on the amber air,
A dark-green beech-wood rises, still and fair,
A white path winding up it like a stair.

And see that girl, with pitcher on her head,
And clean white apron on her gown of red,—
Her even-song of love is but half-said :

She waits the youngest mower. Now he goes ;
Her cheeks are redder than a wild blush-rose :
They climb up where the deepest shadows close.

But though they pass, and vanish, I am there.
I watch his rough hands meet beneath her hair,
Their broken speech sounds sweet to me like prayer.

Ah ! now the rosy children come to play,
And romp and struggle with the new-mown hay ;
Their clear high voices sound from far away.

They know so little why the world is sad,
They dig themselves warm graves and yet are glad ;
Their muffled screams and laughter make me mad !

I long to go and play among them there ;
Unseen, like wind, to take them by the hair.
And gently make their rosy cheeks more fair.

The happy children ! full of frank surprise,
And sudden whims and innocent ecstasies ;
What godhead sparkles from their liquid eyes !

No wonder round those urns of mingled clays
That Tuscan potters fashioned in old days,
And coloured like the torrid earth ablaze,

We find the little gods and loves portrayed,
Through ancient forests wandering undismayed,
And fluting hymns of pleasure unafraid.

They knew, as I do now, what keen delight
A strong man feels to watch the tender flight
Of little children playing in his sight ;

What pure sweet pleasure, and what sacred love,
Comes drifting down upon us from above,
In watching how their limbs and features move.

I do not hunger for a well-stored mind,
I only wish to live my life, and find
My heart in unison with all mankind.

My life is like the single dewy star
That trembles on the horizon's primrose-bar,—
A microcosm where all things living are.

And if, among the noiseless grasses, Death
Should come behind and take away my breath,
I should not rise as one who sorroweth ;

For I should pass ; but all the world would be
Full of desire and young delight and glee,
And why should men be sad through loss of me ?

The light is flying ; in the silver-blue
The young moon shines from her bright window through :
The mowers are all gone, and I go too.

NEW POEMS.

1879

EDMUND GOSSE.

I.—THE GIFTS OF THE MUSES.

AGAINST a platan's root,
Blowing a rustic flute,
Young Daphnis lay, the careless herdsman blithe ;
His nervous fingers ran
Along the tuneful span,
While languor held his well-shaped limbs and lithe ;
Down on his head there rained in wayward flight
A sparkling shower of green reflected light.

He piped an oaten strain
Of math and loaded wain,
Of harvest triumphs drawn along the vales ;
Of songs of wood and hill,
The frail cicala shrill,
And shepherds challenging the nightingales,
Of heifers straying among orchard fruits
And wanton kids that gnaw the fig-tree shoots.

Thoughts of this simple kind
Held all his pastoral mind,
Unlearned in the painful lore of life,
Song and the flute's bright sound
Gilded his rustic round
Of works and ways, with nature ne'er at strife ;
No waters fling their snows down mossy heights
More joyously than he his lyric flights.

Beside him, in the shade,
Stood tall a rosy maid,
The sweet Lycoris of the glistening hair ;
From baskets hung hard by,
She piled an altar high,
With woodland rites and many an artless prayer,
Laid roses on it to the Muses nine,
And laurel to the Pythian more divine.

Then soon, her offering done,
She rested from the sun,
Leaning her locks against a leopard's hide ;
While Daphnis in a dream
Let slip away the stream
Of flute-notes, till their echo wholly died ;
Brown head by golden and brown limbs by white,
Sleep folded round them both its noon-delight.

But while in sleep they lie,
The Muses wander by,
Serene and stately, with their robes of song ;
The dewy flowers they found,
And rustic altar crowned
With homely gifts that did their godhead wrong,
Yet smiled and took them, turned and smiled again
To find their suppliants in a drowsy vein.

Between them passed a sign,
And one among the Nine
Lift up the shepherd's roughly-carven flute,
And from Lycoris' breast,
Turned back the saffron vest,
And, signalling her sisters to be mute,
Took thence the humble amulet that lay
Close by that virgin heart's pure swing and sway.

And then they passed from sight,
Far up the hills of light,
Seeking their sire in many an upland lair,—
With voices hushed and low,
Lest he should come and go,—
Shivering to feel the laurel-scented air,—
Trembling lest every stir of wind and tree
Should lightly turn to music and be He.

But soon, on the cool ground,
Lycoris woke and found
An opal burning on her zoneless breast,
And sought in vain to find
The ring her mother kind
Kissed every night before she bade her rest ;
New hopes sprang up, new passions dim and wild
She rose bewildered, and no more a child.

Out of that shining glade
Slow passed the dreaming maid,
And sought a pool, still as a wingless thought,
So pensively she fared,
A drinking hart was scared,
And woodwards fled, and yet she knew it not ;
Intent in her own imaged form to find
The answering echo of her wakening mind.

And, bending o'er the wave
The mirrored shape it gave
Was taller, fairer than her memory knew ;
From virgin coif to hem
The god's gift of the gem
Flashed mellow radiance, beaming through and through
Till, shrinking back a little in distress,
She blushed, oppressed with her own loveliness.

But soon her pride returned,
And o'er the pool she burned,
Glowing with pleasure at her own fair face,
And thought no more of him
Who, through the forest dim,
Was fain to vaunt her earliest simple grace ;
Who now lay dreaming, while his fingers missed
The pipe he often in her praise had kissed.

So, idly wandering,
She met a conquering king,
High-charioted and garlanded with bays ;
And from his fiery hand,
Took queenship of the land,
And sat, his consort, through her length of days,
Far-famed for peerless beauty, and the frost
Of glittering pomp when love and hope are lost.

But Daphnis, too, distraught,
In wakening hands had caught
No rustic flute rough-hewn of beech-wood light,
But, past his whole desire,
A massive ivory lyre,
Gold-strung and meet to hymn a king's delight ;
As if a snake had made his hand its nest,
He thrust the plectrum from his throbbing breast.

But soon the sighing chords,
Half whispered into words,
Decoyed his fancy with their wayward charm ;
Subtle the notes and strange
With mystic interchange
Of tones that might the wildest heart disarm.
He stooped to take the lovely breathing lyre,
And, as he touched it, all his soul took fire.

He tries a pastoral lay
Of goats that tramp in play,
And mar the treasures of the thrifty bee ;
But ah ! do what he can
He peals a hymn to Pan,
And wakes the woods with dulcet harmony ;
Prophetic strains to none before revealed
Pour out in music from his lips unsealed.

Then he arose and went,
Like one on mission sent,
Through many a vine-hung village of white walls ;
Singing from door to door,
As never sang before
The deftest minstrel under coronals—
His hair unbound, a common shepherd lad,
But for a certain majesty he had.

Maidens and youths began
To haunt the tuneful man,
Following his lyre and him from town to town,
And oft when noon was hot,
In some secluded spot,
The bard would turn and bid them all lie down,
And then while in the pine-tops sigh the wind,
Some thrilling tale of passion he would find.

His praises flew before ;
Men hailed him more and more ;
They loaded him with garlands and with gold ;
Some prayed him to abide
Still in that country-side,
A princely office in the state to hold ;
He thanked them, and with level glance severe
Passed on ; and they were dumb with shame and fear.

For yet with all his fame
Some secret inward flame
Fretted his heart, and made him grave and sad ;
There was no joy or rest
In that god-haunted breast ;
A grand but melancholy face he had,
And women gazing as he passed them by
Drew back, lest they should meet his glance and die.

High up a mountain-side,
Aweing the champaign wide,
The crowning city of that land is set ;
Olive and poplar meet
Along its sun-white street,
And o'er the joyous folk their branches fret.
Against the myrtles, dark above the town,
The palace of an ancient line looks down.

And Daphnis comes at last,
After long years are past,
To smite his lyre before the victor king ;
The people shout and crowd,
And call his name aloud,
Great poet, first of all that chaunt and sing !
He heeds them not nor bows his lovely head,
But steps like Orpheus through the gibbering dead.

About his hair he sets
A wreath of violets,
Tears out the cooling lilies from his lyre,
Reaches the palace door,
And treads the marble floor,
And wins the inmost chamber, fairer, higher,
Where deep transparent shadows fall and meet
Around the despot on his porphyry seat.

They gave him ear for song ;
The courtiers, in a throng,
Applauded lightly when the feat was o'er ;
The king, more apt and wise,
Vowed, by the Titan's eyes,
No loftier ode had reached his sense before,
And shouting, swore, for rapture so divine,
The queen herself should pour a meed of wine.

So, with cool fingers white,
She poured, like rosy light,
The sparkling wine that laughed to see the sun ;
Gravely she gazed at him
Across the twinkling brim,
And praised the victory over music won,
Nor drooped the lids of her large eyes, nor sank,
When from her hand he took the bowl and drank.

' O more than queen,' he cried,
' Ripe to be deified,
The godhead blossoms in those eyes and lips !
Each minor mortal star
Thou dost excel as far
As must this opal other gems eclipse !'
She shuddered inwardly, she knew not why,
And silence fell, and they gazed eye to eye.

So memory stirred in each,
As o'er a tideless beach,
Some wandering wind may ape the loud sea-wave ;
Then, in a moment's space,
Faded from either face
The shade of shades that dim remembrance gave.
She was a queen, erect and fair and cold,
And he a singer to be fee'd with gold.

Forth from that house he went,
With face and shoulders bent,
Burdened with song and faint with vague desire ;
Across the glaring street
He passed, on faltering feet,
Into the temple of the Delian Sire,
And while the priests around him wondered, he
Poured out strange prayer to their great deity.

‘ Bitter the laurel leaf ;
And harsh the barley-sheaf
Dipped in the blood of Niobe for wine ;
More sad than any tears
The weight of rhythmic years ;
More fierce than fire the light upon the shrine ;
More tense the bow, more fell the shafts by far
Than Love’s light arrows, though they poisoned are.

‘ Love hath no part in me,
And hopes before me flee,
As from Narcissus fled his own fair face ;
The morning breaks in vain,
No pleasure and no pain
Its bodiless hours can on my being trace :
I am but as thy lyre ! Oh ! let there start
Immortal music from this hopeless heart.’

And then, uplift anew,
He passed that priesthood through,
And sought the light, fading to eventide,
Within the broad white square
Stood, flushed with roseate air,
While folk came crowding round from far and wide,
Then made great music to their hearts’ delight,
Till the stars gathered fire and it was night.

And so from year to year,
Like some high upland drear,
His lofty spirit and lonely watched the skies,
While still his lips and hands
Wrung wonder from all lands,
Praise found no echo in his changeless eyes ;
Like dawn-struck Memnon by Nile's lonely shore,
He poured his music and was stone once more.

But when his heart was old,
The people brought their gold,
And hewed out marble from the mountains hoar,
Under their hands arose,
Slow, as a cedar grows,
A glorious palace on the south sea-shore,
And there, with slaves and perfumes and fair weather,
He and his lyre were sorrowful together.

One night—so legends say—
The ancient poet lay,
Scaring faint sleep with many a weary thought,
When, through the pillared gold,
The curtains, fold on fold,
Blew out as though a wind for entrance sought,
And all the fragrant lamps were dimly stirred
Though no one moved and not a sound was heard.

Then, through the deepening night,
Clouding the lamps with light,
Into that house the radiant Pythian came ;
The majesty he had
Was self-illumed, and clad
In naked beauty like a rose-red flame.
He spake and smiled ; so keen, so fierce, so fair,
His voice was like a sword and cleft the air.

‘Ah ! poet, ah ! my son,
What meed hast thou not won,
Renowned for song through all my spacious realm !
Ask now thy best desire ;
I swear, on lips of fire,
My bounty shall thy wishes overwhelm !
Ask what thou wilt ; a god before thee stands,
With all earth’s honours heaped upon his hands.’

And Daphnis made reply :
‘ Sec, at thy feet I lie,
All fame concentrates in this brilliant hour ;
Honours enough, and praise
Have crowned my length of days,
Yet that was but the bud and this the flower ;
Give me no more ; but let me dumbly rest,
Within thy radiance intimately blest.

‘ Yet one request I have,
And one desire to crave,
Since thy serenest godhead holds my fate,
Give back the homely flute,
Now long disused and mute,
The sovereign Muses stole to make me great ;
And oh ! my master, take this lyre again,
With all its passion, all its weight of pain ! ’

But when the full dawn broke,
And Daphnis stirred nor spoke,
The slaves in fear drew back the veils’ eclipse ;
There on the stately bed
The ancient bard lay dead,
A smile still hovering on his curvèd lips :
The lyre they found not, but his fingers tight
Were closed upon a flute of beech-wood tight.

II.—THE FARM.

FAR in the soft warm west
There lies an orchard-nest,
Where every spring the black-caps come
And build themselves a downy home.
The apple-boughs entwine,
And make a net-work fine
Through which the morning vapours pass
That rise from off the dewy grass.

And when the spring-warmth shoots
Along the apple roots,
The gnarled old boughs grow full of buds
That gleam and leaf in multitudes.

And then, first cold and white,
Soon flushing with delight ;
The blossom-heads come out and blow,
And mimic sunset-tinted snow.

Just where my farm-house ends
A single gable bends,
And one small window ivy-bound,
Looks into this enchanted ground.

I sit there while I write,
And dream in the dim light
That floods the misty orchard through
A pale-green vapour tinged with blue.

And watch the growing year
The flowers that spring and peer,
The apple-bloom that melts away,
The colours of the changing day.

The falling blossom fills
The cups of daffodils,
That loll their perfume-haunted heads
Along the feathery parsley-beds.

And there the young girls come
To take the gold flowers home ;
They stand there, laughing, lilac-white,
Within the orchard's green twilight.

The rough old walls decay
And moulder day by day ;
The fern-roots tear them, stone by stone,
The ivy drags them, overgrown ; .

But still they serve to keep
This little shrine of sleep
Intact for singing birds and bees
And lovers no less shy than these.

Soft perfumes blown my way
Remind me day by day
How spring and summer flowers arrange
Their aromatic interchange.

For in the still warm night,
I taste the faint delight
Of dim white violets that lie
Far down in depths of greenery.

And from the wild white rose
That in my window blows,
At dawn an odour pure and fine
Comes drifting like the scent of wine.

I live in flower and tree ;
My own life seems to me
A fading trifle scarcely worth
The notice of the jocund earth.

Nor seems it strange indeed
To hold the happy creed
That all fair things that bloom and die
Have conscious life as well as I.

That not in vain arise
The speedwell's azure eyes,
Like stars upon the river's brink,
That shine, unseen of us, and sink.

That not for Man is made
All colour, light and shade,
All beauty ripened out of sight,—
But to fulfil its own delight.

The black-caps croon and swing
Deep in the night, and sing
No songs in which man's life is blent,
But to embody their content.

Then let me joy to be
Alive with bird and tree,
And have no haughtier aim than this,
To be a partner in their bliss.

So shall my soul at peace
From anxious carping cease,
Fed slowly like a wholesome bud
With sap of healthy thoughts and good.

That when at last I die,
No praise may earth deny,
But with her living forms combine
To chant a threnody divine.

III.—TO MY DAUGHTER TERESA.

THOU hast the colours of the Spring
The gold of kingcups triumphing,
The blue of wood-bells wild ;
But winter-thoughts thy spirit fill,
And thou art wandering from us still,
Too young to be our child.

Yct have thy fleeting smiles confessed,—
Thou dear and much-desired guest,—
 That home is near at last ;
Long lost in high mysterious lands,
Close by our door thy spirit stands,
 Its journey well-nigh past.

Oh sweet bewildered soul, I watch
The fountains of thine eyes, to catch
 New fancies bubbling there.
To feel our common light, and lose
The flush of strange ethereal hues
 Too dim for us to share !

Fade, cold immortal lights, and make
This creature human for my sake,
 Since I am nought but clay ;
An angel is too fine a thing
To sit beside my chair and sing,
 And cheer my passing day.

I smile, who could not smile, unless
The air of rapt unconsciousness
 Passed with the fading hours ;
I joy in every childish sign
That proves the stranger less divine
 And much more weakly ours.

I smile, as one by night who sees,
Through mist of newly budded trees,
 The clear Orion set,
And knows that soon the dawn will fly
In fire across the riven sky,
 And gild the woodlands wet.

FIRDAUSI IN EXILE AND OTHER POEMS.

1886.

EDMUND GOSSE.

THE CRUISE OF THE "ROVER."

THEY sailed away one morning when sowing-time
was over,
In long red fields above the sea they left the
sleeping wheat ;
Twice twenty men of Devonshire who manned their
ship the *Rover*
Below the little busy town where all the schooners
meet.

Their sweethearts came and waved to them, and
filled with noise and laughter
The echoing port below the cliff where thirty craft
can ride ;
Each lad cried out "Farewell to thee," the captain
shouted after,
"By God's help we'll be back again before the
harvest tide."

They turned the Start and slipped along with speedy
wind and weather ;
Passed white Terceira's battlements, and, close
upon the line,
Ran down a little carrack full of cloth, and silk, and
leather,
And golden Popish images and good madeira wine.

The crew with tears and curses went tacking back
to Flores ;

The English forty cut the seas where none before
had been,

And spent the seething purple nights in English
songs, and stories

Of England, and her soldiers, and her Spaniard-
hating queen.

At last the trade-wind caught them, the pale sharks
reeled before them,

The little *Rover* shot ahead across the western
seas ;

All night the larger compass of a tropic sky passed
o'er them,

Till they neared the Mexique water's through a
strait of banyan-trees.

And then good luck befell them, for divers times they
sighted

The sails of Spanish merchantmen bound home-
ward with their wares ;

And twice they failed to follow them, and once they
stopped benighted ;

And thrice the flag of truce flew out, and the
scented prize was theirs.

But midsummer was on them, with close-reefed
gales and thunder,

Their heavy vessel wallowed beneath her weight
of gold ;

A long highway of ocean kept them and home
asunder,

So back they turned towards England with a richly
laden hold.

But just outside Tampico a man-of-war was riding,
And all the mad young English blood in forty
brains awoke,
The *Rover* chased the monster, and swiftly shore-
wards gliding,
Dipped down beneath the cannonade that o'er her
bulwarks broke.

Three several days they fought her, and pressed
her till she grounded
On the sandy isle of Carmen, where milky palm-
trees grow ;
Whereat she waved an ensign, a peaceful trumpet
sounded,
And all the Spaniards cried for truce surrendering
in a row.

Alas ! the wiles and jesuitries of scoundrel-hearted
Spaniards !
The scarlet woman dyes their hands in deeper red
than hers,
For every scrap of white that decked their tackling
and their lanyards,
Just proved them sly like devils and cowardly
like curs.

For out from countless coverts, from low palm-shaded
islands
That fledged in seeming innocence the smooth and
shining main,
The pinnaces came gliding and hemmed them round
in silence,
All manned with Indian bravos and whiskered
dogs of Spain.

The captain darted forward, his fair hair streamed
behind him,

He shouted in his cheery voice, "For home and
for the queen!"

Three times he waved his gallant sword, but the
flashes seemed to blind him,

And a hard look came across his mouth where
late a smile had been.

We levelled with our muskets, and the foremost
boat went under,

The ship's boy seized a trumpet and blew a merry
blast;

The Spanish rats held off awhile and gazed at us in
wonder,

But the hindmost pushed the foremost on, and
boarded us at last.

They climbed the larboard quarter with their
hatchets and their sabres;

The Devon lads shot fast and hard, and sank their
second boat,

But the popish hordes were legion, and Hercules
his labours

Are light beside the task to keep a riddled bark
afloat.

And twenty men had fallen, and the *Rover's* deck
was reeling,

And the brave young captain died in shouting
loud "Elizabeth!"

The Spaniards dragged the rest away just while the
ship was heeling,

Lest she should sink and rob them of her sailors'
tortured breath.

For they destined them to perish in a slow and cruel
slaughter,

A feast for monks and Jesuits too exquisite to
lose;

So they caught the English sailors as they leaped
into the water,

And a troop of horse as convoy brought them
north to Vera Cruz.

They led them up a sparkling beach of burning sand
and coral,

They dragged the brave young Englishmen like
hounds within the leash;

They passed between an open wood of leaves that
smelt of laurel,

Bound close together, each to each, with cords
that cut the flesh.

And miles and miles along the coast they tramped
beneath no cover,

Till in their mouths each rattling tongue was like
a hard dry seed,

And ere they came to Vera Cruz when that long day
was over,

The coral cut their shoes to rags and made them
wince and bleed.

Then as they clambered up the town, the jeering
crowd grew thicker,

And laughed to see their swollen feet, and figures
marred and bent,

And women with their hair unloosed stood under-
neath the flicker

Of torch and swinging lantern, and cursed them
as they went.

And three men died of weariness before they reached
the prison,
And one fell shrieking with the pain of a poniard
in the back ;
And when dawn broke in the morning, three other
souls had risen
To bear the dear Lord witness of the hellish
Spaniard pack.

But the monks girt up their garments, the friars bound
their sandals,
They hurried to the market-place with faggots of
dry wood,
And the acolytes came singing, with their incense
and their candles,
To offer to their images a sacrifice of blood.

But they sent a leech to tend them, with his pouch
and his long phial,
And the Jesuits came smiling, with honied words
at first,
For they dared not burn the heretics without some
show of trial ;
And the English lads were dying of poisoned air
and thirst.

So they gave them draughts of water from a great
cold earthen firkin,
And brought them to the courtyard where the tall
hidalgo sat,
And he looked a gallant fellow in his boots and his
rough jerkin,
With the jewels on his fingers, and the feathers
in his hat.

And he spoke out like a soldier, for he said, "Ye
caught them fighting,

They met you with the musket, by the musket
they shall fall ;

They are Christians in some fashion, and the pile
you're bent on lighting

Shall blaze with none but Indians, or it shall not
blaze at all."

So they led them to a clearing in the wood outside
the city,

Struck off the gyves that bound them, and freed
each crippled hand,

And dark-eyed women clustered round and mur-
mured in their pity,

But won no glance nor answer from the steadfast
English band.

For their lives rose up before them in crystalline
completeness,

And they lost the flashing soldiery, the sable
horde of Rome,

And the great magnolias round them, with wave on
wave of sweetness,

Seemed just the fresh profusion and hawthorn
lanes of home.

They thought about the harvests, and wondered who
would reap them ;

They thought about the little port where thirty
craft can ride ;

They thought about their sweethearts, and prayed
the Lord to keep them ;

Then kissed each other silently, and hand in hand
they died.

William Ernest Henley.

1849.

MR. WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY, who is distinguished both as a poet and a critic, and, in a less degree, as a dramatist also, was born in 1849 at Gloucester, where he received his education. As a boy and young man he was a great sufferer, and in 1873 he journeyed to Edinburgh to place himself under the charge of the distinguished surgeon, Professor (afterwards Sir Joseph) Lister. After spending twenty months in the Old Edinburgh Infirmary—his experiences in which provided the raw material for his most striking series of poems—Mr. Henley found himself restored to comparatively good health, and resolved to settle in London. He became an active contributor to various well-known journals and magazines, and helped to found *London*, of which, for some time (1876—1878), he was the editor, many of the poems afterwards published in "A Book of Verses" (1887) making their first appearance in its columns. From 1882 to 1886 he edited the *Magazine of Art*: he was afterwards connected with the editorial department of the *Art Journal*: and his work on Millet and various scattered contributions to art criticism are the utterances of one who speaks with the authority of wide knowledge and fine judgment. In 1889, a year after he had gained instant fame as a poet

by the publication of his "Book of Verses," he became editor of the *Scots*—afterwards the *National Observer*. His "Views and Reviews," a selection from his critical articles contributed to the *Athenæum* and other journals, was published in 1890; in the same year appeared his admirable notes on the life and works of Sir Henry Raeburn; and, in addition to his other work, Mr. Henley has collaborated with his friend Mr. R. L. Stevenson in the production of several plays, one of which, *Deacon Brodie*, a sombre and powerful drama, has had a successful run in the United States. Few of the younger writers of our time can show an output with such fine equality of varied excellence; but it is as a poet that Mr. Henley makes the strongest appeal to lovers of the good things of literary art. The series of poems in his earliest volume entitled "In Hospital: Rhymes and Rhythms," gave to the world assurance of a seër and a singer with a new vision, and a power of rendering it so intimate and exquisite that the effect produced had a unique attractiveness, compounded of the charms that belong to the delightfully familiar and the delightfully strange. In the kind of poetry which, for want of a better term may be called realistic, the central difficulty is that of grappling with those details which have a look of being irredeemably prosaic. Mr. Henley does not ignore or reject them, nor does he impart them into his work in their native inertness of prose: by a fine magic he informs them with imaginative life, and without ceasing to be themselves, they become worthy poetic material. The opening poems of the series, "In Hospital," strike the keynote of the treatment. They are mainly devoted to the laying

in of a background, but it is not a *mere* background: it is made by subtle touches to give tone and value to the figures in front of it. The effect is largely achieved by an exquisiteness of frugal but not penurious epithet. "Enter Patient":—

"The morning mists still haunt the stony street;
The northern summer air is shrill and cold;
And lo, the Hospital, gray, quiet, old,
Where life and death like friendly chaffers meet.
Thro' the loud spaciousness and draughty gloom
A small strange child,—so aged yet so young!—
Her little arm besplinted and beslung,
Precedes me gravely to the waiting-room.

* * * *

A tragic meanness seems so to environ
These corridors and stairs of stone and iron,
Cold, naked, clean—half-workhouse and half-jail."

Then comes the waiting-room,

"A square, squat room (a cellar on promotion)—
Drab to the soul, drab to the very daylight"

Where

"At their ease two dressers do their chores.
One has a probe—it feels to me a crowbar.
A small boy sniffs and shudders after bluestone.
A poor old tramp explains his poor old ulcers.
Life is (I think) a blunder and a shame."

How full of force and life is this. Crabbe could have done something very like it, but his movement would have been slow, his hand heavy: here every thing is swift and light. It is the instinctive eclecticism of the imagination: no touch is insignificant, and therefore every touch tells. Then on to the Interior where

"The gaunt brown walls
Look infinite in their decent meanness.
There is nothing of home in the noisy kettle,
The fulsome fire;"

and on again to the operating table, where the patient is to be initiated into "the thick, sweet mystery of chloroform, the drunken dark, the little death-in-life":—

"Then they bid you close your eyelids,
And they mask you with a napkin,
And the anæsthetic reaches
Hot and subtle through your being.

"And you gasp, and reel, and shudder
In a rushing, swaying rapture,
While the voices at your elbow
Fade—receding—fainter—farther.

"Lights about you shower and tumble,
And your blood seems crystallising—
Edged and vibrant, yet within you
Racked and hurried back and forward.

"Then the lights grow fast and furious,
And you hear a noise of waters,
And you wrestle, blind and dizzy,
In an agony of effort,

"Till a sudden lull accepts you,
And you sound an utter darkness . . .
And awaken . . . with a struggle . . .
On a hushed, attentive audience."

The hospital portraits—the staff-nurses of the old and new style, the lady probationers, the clinical professor, the suicide, the sailor, the ploughman, and the rest—are all wonderfully effective, not with the effectiveness of rhetorical pictorialism, but with the nakedly veracious rendering of a passionately observant imagination. Mr. Henley calls one of them "An Etching";—the title might be used for all; and though they are for the most part drawn in outline, with only the essential minimum of modelling, they gain rather than lose by his abstinence from elaboration. The poems entitled

“Pastoral” and “Music” come as delightful interludes; and no poet has given us a more finely expressive and interpretative utterance of the rapture of vividly realised life than is to be found in the poem “Discharged.” The patient is emancipated from the gaunt brown walls, and is once more free of the wind and the sunshine; he has left the lazaret-house for the beautiful world:—

“O the wonder, the spell of the streets!
The stature and strength of the horses,
The rustle and echo of footfalls,
The flat roar and rattle of wheels!
A swift tram floats huge on us . . .
It's a dream?
The smell of the mud in my nostrils
Is brave—like a breath of the sea!

As of old,
Ambulant, undulant drapery,
Vaguely and strangely provocative,
Flutters and beckons. O yonder—
Scarlet!—the glint of a stocking!
Sudden a spire,
Wedged in the mist! O the houses,
The long lines of lofty, gray houses!
Cross-hatched with shadow and light,
These are the streets. . . .
Each is an avenue leading
Whither I will!”

The series of poems grouped under the title “Life and Death” have so fine a lyrical feeling that in many of them Mr. Henley as a singer, pure and simple, is seen at his best. The section is rich in pleasant pictures, in happy fancies, in fine celebrations of emotional moments; and it contains one strong, intense, self-contained lyric of self-revelation,—the poem that opens with the stanza,

“Out of the night that covers me,
Black as the pit from pole to pole,
I thank whatever gods may be
For my unconquerable soul,”—

which is worthy of a place beside “The Old Stoic” of Emily Brontë.

The final section entitled “Bric-à-Brac,” consisting of sonnets and poems in several of the old French forms, is perhaps on the whole less interesting, save to students of literary *technique*; but the quaint fancy of one *ballade*, “Of a Toyokuni Colour-Print,” the imaginative glow in another, “Of Midsummer Days and Nights,” and the perfect craftsmanship of both, indeed of all, gives to these exercises a distinction rare in a class of work where ingenuity often supersedes inspiration. Mr. Henley’s second volume, “The Song of the Sword and other Verses” (1892), deepens and sharpens, but leaves otherwise almost unchanged, the impression struck by the “Book of Verses.” The only new note is sounded by the fine rhetoric—the rhetoric of impassioned imagination, not of mere facile fluency—which makes itself heard in the title-poem and in the patriotic verses,

“What have I done for you,
England, my England?”

The “London Voluntaries” and most of the “Rhymes and Rhythms” sustain the artistic manner but enlarge the imaginative scope of the poems “In Hospital.” The voice is the same, but in the ample spaciousness of a world that spreads itself gloriously under a sky, instead of revealing itself grimly under a roof, it displays a wider compass, a richer quality. Here is a passage from the second of the “Voluntaries”:—

“ For earth and sky and air
Are golden everywhere,
And golden with a gold so suave and fine
The looking on it lifts the heart like wine.
Trafalgar Square
(The fountains volleying golden glaze)
Gleams like an angel-market. High aloft
Over his couchant Lions in a haze
Shimmering and bland and soft,
A dust of chrysoprase,
Our Sailor takes the golden gaze
Of the saluting sun, and flames superb
As once he flamed it on his ocean round.
The dingy dreariness of the picture-place,
Turned very nearly bright,
Takes on a certain dismal grace,
And shows not all a scandal to the ground.
The very blind man pottering on the kerb,
Among the posies and the ostrich feathers
And the rude voices touched with all the weathers
Of all the varying year,
Shares in the universal alms of light.
The windows, with their fleeting, flickering fires,
The height and spread of frontage shining sheer,
The glistening signs, the rejoicing roofs and spires—
’Tis El Dorado—El Dorado plain,
The Golden City ! And when a girl goes by,
Look ! as she turns her glancing head,
A call of gold is floated from her ear !
Golden, all golden ! In a golden glory,
Long lapsing down a golden coasted sky,
The day not dies but seems
Dispersed in wafts and dritts of gold, and shed
Upon a past of golden song and story
And memories of gold and golden dreams.”

This is the imagination which sees and transfigures in seeing, and in the rendering of its vision Mr. Henley achieves his finest triumphs. Our final selection is from the “Rhymes and Rhythms”—a celebration of the autumnal glory :—

“Failing yet gracious,
Slow pacing, soon homing,
A patriarch that strolls
Through the tents of his children,
The Sun, as he journeys
His round on the lower
Ascents of the blue,
Washes the roofs
And the hillsides with clarity ;
Charms the dark pools
Till they break into pictures ;
Scatters magnificent
Alms to the beggar trees
Touches the mist-folk
That crowd to his escort
Into translucencies
Radiant and ravishing,
As with the visible
Spirit of Summer
Gloriously vaporised,
Visioned in gold.
Love, though the fallen leaf
Mark, and the fleeting light
And the loud, loitering
Footfall of darkness
Sign, to the heart
Of the passage of destiny,
Here is the ghost
Of a summer that lived for us,
Here is a promise
Of summers to be.”

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

Philip Bourke Marston.

1850—1887.

IT was a fortunate, and yet an unfortunate, thing for Philip Marston that when Fate set him to sing darkling (as men veil the cage of a songbird in order that it may more readily learn its note), the voice from the outer world which he could always the most easily distinguish, was the voice of Dante Rossetti. Fortunate, for the reason that Marston could scarcely have chosen a more consummate master of song under whom to perfect the gift with which he was endowed ; unfortunate, for the reason that the blind poet's love and reverence for his master, and for his master's work, were so ardent that his thoughts became saturated and coloured with Rossetti's to an extent which tended to subordinate his own individuality. Hence there are passages in the poems of the younger singer which inevitably recall similar passages in those of the elder, and a comparison is thus instituted which it is no serious disparagement of Marston to say is not to his own advantage. In lyric loveliness, and grace, some of the blind poet's work is not unworthy of Rossetti, but we miss in Marston's lines the deep-mouthed volume of sound, the rhythmic splendour and sonority which are rarely absent from the Pre-Raphaelite's. Marston's voice, too, is, for all its sweetness, thin and shrill after Rossetti's, and the

framework of his poetry is slender, and lacking in intellectual robustness. Moreover he is diffuse and often painfully unequal, for although his lines are never wanting in grace and in fluency, he had that fatal facility for verse-making which often leads to the publication of much that is mediocre and immature. Melody is his one unfailing characteristic, and musical, at least, his lines always are. The harp he touched was strung with silver chords, attuned to subtle sweetness, but his range of music was narrow, and of bass notes he had but few. There were times when, under the influence of a stirring thought, he beat out a strain of solemn grandeur, but most of his melodies are set to a minor key, and are rendered more or less monotonous by an ever-recurrent note of sadness. His poems have been called "gloomy," and gloomy, indeed, many of them are; but as one sometimes hears ringing from a darkened chamber of mourning, cries which condense a whole life-history into half-a-dozen passionate words, so from the perpetual darkness in which the blind poet lived, there arose a voice athrill with such intensity of feeling, that men, hearing it, paused involuntarily to listen. Philip Marston's story is one of the most pathetic in the history of recent literature. He was born in London on August 13th, 1850, and was the only son of the late Dr. Westland Marston. At the age of four, he received an injury to one of his eyes, and inflammation setting in, it was evident that his sight was seriously affected. He did not, however, become absolutely blind until many years after, but increasing failure of vision made him dependent upon the devoted ministrations of his mother, whose

death was his first great grief. In 1871 his experimental volume, "Songtide," was published, and obtained immediate recognition as the work of a singer of exceptional promise; but even in the first flush of his success, a crushing calamity befell him in the death of Miss Mary Nesbit, a sister to Mrs. Bland, to whom he was engaged to be married. The death of his sister Cicely, in 1878, was scarcely less pathetic, for Cicely was the most devoted and self-sacrificing of sisters. Oliver Madox Brown had died while Marston was preparing for the press his second volume, "All in All," and the wrench had been terrible; but the loss of Cicely was the crowning catastrophe of the poet's life, and it was a catastrophe which was followed within a twelve-month by the loss of his sister Nelly, and shortly afterward by that of his brother-in-law, Arthur O'Shaughnessy. The death of Rossetti filled his cup to the full, for in Rossetti Marston lost a friend of whom he could never speak without enthusiasm. But one friend he had remaining—the best beloved of all, Mrs. Louise Chandler Moulton, the story of whose untiring and generous devotion to him will form, when it comes to be told, one of the most beautiful and touching chapters in the history of literary friendships. When, in 1883, Marston published his third volume "Wind Voices," it was to Mrs. Moulton, "True Friend and True Poet," that the book was dedicated; and it was Mrs. Moulton who, at his death, was appointed his literary executor. How self-sacrificingly and ably she has fulfilled her trust is too well known to need description. "Wind Voices" received immediate and hearty recognition, and deservedly so, but the book was the last work

which Marston lived to see through the press. From the date of its issue down to the time of his illness and death, he contributed to various periodicals, but his health was visibly failing, and in January 1887 he was stricken by serious illness, of which he died, on February 14th, in the same year.

If the name of Philip Bourke Marston is to live in English literature, it will be by his flower-poems or "*Garden Secrets*," and by a few of his sonnets and lyrics. A flower, especially a sweet-scented one, never failed to move him deeply. Time had robbed him of love, hope, and friends, and had plunged him into a mental gloom blacker even than the physical darkness in which he lived, as in a house of which he was the only tenant, and which seemed to him, at the last, like a charnel chamber strewn with the ashes of dead hope, dead love, and dead aspiration. But a flower, fair, fresh and immortal as in the days of his youth, and to him the one unchanging and perfect thing in a changing and decaying world, would call forth a new hope within him, and would waken in the heart of the blinded, sorrow-stricken poet, some memory of his happier self. Hence he could scarcely speak of flowers without his words rising into poetry, and he has personified them in language which recalls the ripple and run, the lightness and lilt of the Elizabethans.

Of the wind as well as of flowers, Marston has written with singular power and beauty. With the wind, indeed, he always had a strange sympathy: and one is tempted at times to fancy that it was to the accompaniment, and under the inspiration of Eolian music that certain of his poems were written; for in the wind harp's fitful strain—now sighing in

and out among the strings, soft, and low, and scarcely audible ; now upswelling to a shrill and stormy cry of passionate sorrow, but always sweet, sad, and most musically mournful—there is that which strangely recalls the voice of the blind poet, and which seems to suggest the source and secret of his singing.

Not the least remarkable characteristic of Marston's mournful and musical verses is his constant anticipation of death. Even at the very outset of his life-journey, and as he was groping his way in his sunless, starless solitude, Philip Marston found that all the signposts of life which he chanced on, pointed always in one of two directions—"To Love" or "To Death"; nor was it long before, following the path to Love, he found it lead to, and lose itself in, that to Death, and so it came about that Death, and such thoughts as are expressed in the following poem "Alas," were never long absent from his mind :—

"Alas for all high hopes and all desires !

Like leaves in yellow autumn-time they fall.

Alas for prayers and psalms, and love's pure fires ;

One silence and one darkness ends them all.

"Alas for all the world—sad, fleeting race !

Alas, my Love, for you and me Alas !

Grim Death will clasp *us* in his close embrace ;

We, too, like all the rest, from earth must pass.

"Alas! to think we must forget some hours

Whereof the memory like Love's planet glows—

Forget them, as the year her withered flowers—

Forget them as the June forgets the rose.

"Our keenest rapture, our most deep despair,

Our hopes, our dreads, our laughter and our tears,

Shall be no more at all upon the air—

No more at all through all the endless years.

"*We* shall be mute beneath the grass and dew—

In that dark kingdom where Death reigns in state—

And you will be as I, and I as you—
One silence shed upon us, and one fate."

These lines of Marston's have a strange pathos to us who read them when the grass grows thick upon his grave. It seems as if he must be still alive, as if the man who wrote them was *too human to die*; as if death were not natural but unnatural; and as if it were scarcely less natural to tear a nestling babe from the bosom of its mother and to cast it out into the night, than to drag us from the familiar breast of this dear old earth to which we cling—this earth with its love and friendship and little children, its fields and flowers, sea and sky, sunlight and starshine, and sweet consolations of Art and Song—and hustle us away underground, where never a human voice nor ray of sunlight can reach us more.

And yet, in other moods, it seems to me as if death were less like an iron curtain, let down between us and our lost ones, than like the blinds we set in our windows,—blinds, which from the outside look black and impenetrable, but which from the inside, scarce serve to soften the light. And at such times, I seem to see—close-pressed against the windows of the House of Death which he has entered,—the face of Philip Marston loom out into the night, as he turns from the joyful greetings of sister, mother, father, and friends, and steals a wistful glance at the sweet vain world he has left behind. He is lonely now no longer, and sadness has gone forever from his brow, but in the sightless eyes—sightless never again—I seem to see a look of tender and infinite pity for us who have yet to face the mystery which he has solved.

COULSON KERNAHAN.

SONG-TIDE.

1871.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

THE ROSE AND THE WIND.

(GARDEN SECRETS.)

DAWN.

The Rose.

WHEN think you comes the Wind,
The Wind that kisses me and is so kind ?
Lo, how the Lily sleeps ! her sleep is light ;
Would I were like the Lily, pale and white !
Will the Wind come ?

The Beech.

Perchance for you too soon.

The Rose.

If not, how could I live until the noon ?
What, think you, Beech-tree, makes the Wind delay ?
Why comes he not at breaking of the day ?

The Beech.

Hush, child, and, like the Lily, go to sleep.

The Rose.

You know I cannot.

The Beech.

Nay, then, do not weep.

(*After a pause.*)

Your lover comes, be happy now, O Rose !
He softly through my bending branches goes.
Soon he shall come, and you shall feel his kiss.

The Rose.

Already my flushed heart grows faint with bliss ;
Love, I have longed for you through all the night.

The Wind.

And I to kiss your petals warm and bright.

The Rose.

Laugh round me, Love, and kiss me ; it is well.
Nay, have no fear, the Lily will not tell.

MORNING.

The Rose.

'Twas dawn when first you came ; and now the sun
Shines brightly and the dews of dawn are done.
'Tis well you take me so in your embrace ;
But lay me back again into my place,
For I am worn, perhaps with bliss extreme.

The Wind.

Nay, you must wake, Love, from this childish dream.

The Rose.

'Tis you, Love, who seem changed ; your laugh is loud,
And 'neath your stormy kiss my head is bowed.
O Love, O Wind, a space will you not spare ?

The Wind.

Not while your petals are so soft and fair.

The Rose.

My buds are blind with leaves, they cannot see,—
O Love, O Wind, will you not pity me ?

EVENING.

The Beech.

O Wind, a word with you before you pass ;
What did you to the Rose that on the grass
Broken she lies and pale, who loves you so ?

The Wind.

Roses must live and love, and winds must blow.

ALL IN ALL.

1875.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

IN THE NOVEMBER NIGHT.

I WONDER, when the moonless night had come
On that November day,
And the street's roar subsided to a hum,
While winds upon their way
Sang of the coming winter, and the rain
Drove drearily against the window-pane,
How felt she, knowing she was loved at length,
As men but love when young,—
With all the untamed ardour and the strength
That overflow in song;
When the whole spirit has no hope but one,
Which, quenched, it grows a sky without a sun.
Was she more glad or sorry? Did she say,—
"This love but lives to die"—
And sit and watch the firelight fairies play
About the room, and sigh,
Because her heart's surprise still left unproved,
Whether she pitied more, or more, she loved?
Did she sit long that time, with gold brown hair
Shed over shoulders white,
Recalling each intense, unspoken prayer
Of his love-looks that night?
Did she think over words of his, it seem'd
That she in some past life of hers had dream'd?
Did she say, smiling to herself, "The song
He made then was of me?"
And as some rapt musician will prolong
The tune he plays, did she
Think of the days gone by, wherein her soul
But guess'd in part, what now it knew in whole?

Did she recall the night they met on first?—

Wonder, if even then

Love as a revelation on him burst,

While lesser aims of men

Died in his heart before his love at once,

As light of stars expires in light of suns?

Or grew his love upon him as a tune,

Which heard, we'd hear again,

And once more having heard, find sure and soon

Work in the heart and brain,

And dreaming of it, wake up in the night,

Half mad, because we cannot sing it right?

Oh the soul's rapture, when it has by rote

That melody complete;

When the voice, clinging to each separate note

Of each particular sweet,

Loses no jot or atom till the soul

Rest at the full completion of the whole!

Did she lie long awake that night to hear

The wind among the trees?

Did she say over his first song of her?

And was it pain or peace

To know she was beloved so? Who shall say?

But this I know, that, as deep natures may,

She shut that love of his within her breast,

Apart from vulgar eyes;

Let those who will, by look and voice attest

Their lesser victories:

Whether she bade it live or turn to dust,

She kept his love as a most sacred trust.

WIND VOICES.

1883.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

I.—PURE SOULS.

PURE souls that watch above me from afar,
To whom as to the stars I raise my eyes,
Draw me to your large skies,
Where God and quiet are.

Love's mouth is rose-red, and his voice is sweet,
His feet are winged, his eyes are as clear fire;
But I have no desire
To follow his winged feet.

Friendship may change, or friends may pass away,
And Fame's a bride that men soon weary of;
Since rest is not with Love,
No joy that is may stay.

But they whose lives are pure, whose hearts are high,—
Those shining spirits by the world untamed,—
May at the end, unshamed,
Look on their days gone by.

O pure, strong souls, so star-like, calm, and bright,
If even I before the end might feel,
Through quiet pulses, steal
Your pureness, with purged sight

I might Spring's gracious work behold once more,
Might hear, as once I heard, long, long ago,
Great waters ebb and flow;
Might smell the rose of yore;

Might comprehend the winds and clouds again,
The saintly, peaceful moonlight hallowing all,
The scent of leaves that fall,
The Autumn's tender pain.

Ah, this, I fear, shall never chance to me ;
But though I cannot shape the life I would,
It surely still is good
To look where such lives be.

II.—AT PARTING.

I PUT my flower of song into thy hand,
And turn my eyes away,—
It is a flower from a most desolate land,
Barren of sun and day,
Even this life of mine.
As two who meet upon a foreign strand,
'Twas mine with thee to stray,—
I put this flower of song into thy hand
And turn my eyes away,
And look where no lights shine.
By phantom wings this desolate air seems fanned,
Where sky and sea show gray—
I put my flower of song into thy hand
And turn my eyes away,
But to no other shrine.
My hopes are like a little Christian band
The heathen came to slay—
I put this flower of song into thy hand
And turn my eyes away,—
Keep thou the song in sign.
Some day, it may be, thou by me shalt stand
When no word my lips say,
And, holding then this song-flower in thy hand,
Shalt turn thine eyes away,
And drop pure tears divine.
We part at Fate's inexorable command ;
We name no meeting day—
I put my flower of song into thy hand,

And turn my eyes away,—
 These eyes that burn and pine.
 Thy way leads summerwards ; thy paths are spanned
 By boughs where spring winds play—
 I put my flower of song into thy hand
 To turn my eyes away
 To Life's dark boundary line.
 Fair are thy groves, thy fields lie bright and bland,
 Where evil has no sway—
 I put my flower of song into thy hand
 And turn my eyes away
 To meet Fate's eyes, malign.
 Sometime, when twilight holds and fills the land,
 And glad souls are less gay,
 Take thou this song-flower in thy tender hand
 Nor turn thine eyes away,
 There in the day's decline.
 My life lies dark before me, all unplanned ;
 Loud winds assail the day,—
 I leave my song-flower folded in thy hand,
 And turn my eyes away,
 And turn my life from thine.

III.—THE OLD CHURCHYARD OF BONCHURCH.

[This old churchyard has been for many years slipping toward the sea, which it is expected will ultimately engulf it.]

THE churchyard leans to the sea with its dead,—
 It leans to the sea with its dead so long.
 Do they hear, I wonder, the first bird's song,
 When the winter's anger is all but fled ;
 The high, sweet voice of the west wind,
 The fall of the warm, soft rain,
 When the second month of the year
 Puts heart in the earth again ?

Do they hear, through the glad April weather,
The green grasses waving above them ?
Do they think there are none left to love them,
They have lain for so long there, together ?
Do they hear the note of the cuckoo,
The cry of gulls on the wing,
The laughter of winds and waters,
The feet of the dancing Spring ?

Do they feel the old land slipping seaward,—
The old land, with its hills and its graves,—
As they gradually slide to the waves,
With the wind blowing on them from leeward ?
Do they know of the change that awaits them,—
The sepulchre vast and strange ?
Do they long for the days to go over,
And bring that miraculous change ?

Or love they their night with no moonlight,
With no starlight, no dawn to its gloom ?
Do they sigh : “ ’Neath the snow, or the bloom
Of the wild things that wave from our night,
We are warm, through winter and summer ;
We hear the winds rave, and we say,—
‘The storm-wind blows over our heads,
But we, here, are out of its way ’ ” ?

Do they mumble low, one to another,
With a sense that the waters that thunder
Shall ingather them all, draw them under,—
“ Ah, how long to our moving, my brother ?
How long shall we quietly rest here,
In graves of darkness and ease ?
The waves, even now, may be on us,
To draw us down under the seas ! ”

Do they think 'twill be cold when the waters
That they love not, that neither can love them ?
Shall eternally thunder above them ?
Have they dread of the sea's shining daughters,
That people the bright sea-regions
And play with the young sea-kings ?
Have they dread of their cold embraces,
And dread of all strange sea-things ?
But their dread or their joy,—it is bootless :
They shall pass from the breast of their mother ;
They shall lie low, dead brother by brother,
In a place that is radiant and fruitless ;
And the folk that sail over their heads
In violent weather
Shall come down to them, haply, and all
They shall lie there, together.

IV.—THE TWO BURDENS.

OVER the deep sea Love came flying ;
Over the salt sea Love came sighing—
Alas, O Love, for thy journeying wings !
Through turbid light and sound of thunder,
When one wave lifts and one falls under,
Love flew, as a bird flies, straight for warm Springs.
Love reached the Northland, and found his own ;
With budding roses, and roses blown,
And wonderful lilies, he wove their wreath ;
His voice was sweet as a tune that wells,
Gathers and thunders, and throbs and swells,
And fails, and lapses in rapturous death.
His hands divided the tangled boughs ;
They sat and loved in a moist, green house,
With bird-songs and sunbeams faltering through ;
One note of wind to each least light leaf :

O Love, those days they were sweet but brief,—
 Sweet as the rose is, and fleet as the dew !
 Over the deep sea Death came flying ;
 Over the salt sea Death flew sighing :
 Love heard from afar the rush of his wings,
 Felt the blast of them over the sea,
 And turned his face where the shadows be,
 And wept for a sound of disastrous things.
 Death reached the Northland, and claimed his own ;
 With pale, sweet flowers, by wet winds blown,
 He wove for the forehead of one a wreath ;
 His voice was sad as the wind that sighs
 Through cypress trees under rainy skies,
 When the dead leaves drift on the path beneath.
 His hands divided the tangled boughs,
 One lover he bore to a dark, deep house,
 Where never a bridegroom may clasp his bride,—
 A place of silence, of dust, and sleep ;
 What vigil there shall the loved one keep,
 What cry of longing the lips divide ?

V.—BEFORE AND AFTER FLOWERING.

BEFORE.

First Violet.

L O here ! how warm and dark and still it is ;
 Sister, lean close to me, that we may kiss.
 Here we go rising, rising—know'st thou where ?

Second Violet.

Indeed I cannot tell, nor do I care,
 It is so warm and pleasant here. But hark !
 What strangest sound was that above the dark ?

First Violet.

As if our sisters all together sang,—
 Seemed it not so ?

Second Violet.

More loud than that it rang ;
And louder still it rings, and seems more near.
Oh, I am shaken through and through with fear—
Now in some deadly grip I seemed confined !
Farewell, my sister ! Rise, and follow, and find !

First Violet.

From how far off those last words seemed to fall !
Gone where she will not answer when I call !
How lost ? how gone ? Alas ! this sound above me, —
“ Poor little Violet, left with none to love thee ! ”
And now, it seems, I break against that sound !
What bitter pain is this that binds me round,
This pain I press into ! Where have I come ?

AFTER.

A Crocus.

Welcome, dear sisters, to our fairy home !
They call this Garden ; and the time is Spring.
Like you I have felt the pain of flowering ;
But, oh, the wonder and the deep delight
It was to stand here, in the broad sunlight,
And feel the Wind flow round me cool and kind ;
To hear the singing of the leaves the Wind
Goes hurrying through ; to see the mighty Trees,
Where every day the blossoming buds increase.
At evening, when the shining Sun goes in,
The gentler lights look down, and dew begins,
And all is still, beneath the quiet sky,
Save sometimes for the Wind's low lullaby.

First Tree.

Poor little flowers !

Second Tree.

What would you prate of, now ?

First Tree.

They have not heard ; I will keep still. Speak low.

First Violet.

The Trees bend to each other lovingly.

Crocus.

Daily they whisper of fair things to be.
Great talk they make about the coming Rose,
The very fairest flower, they say, that blows !
Such scent she hath ; her leaves are red, they say,
And fold her round in some divine, sweet way.

First Violet.

Would she were come, that for ourselves we might
Have pleasure in this wonder of delight !

Crocus.

Here comes the laughing, dancing, hurrying rain ;
How all the Trees laugh at the Wind's light strain !

First Violet.

We are so near the earth, the Wind goes by
And hurts us not ; but if we stood up high,
Like Trees, then should we soon be blown away.

Second Violet.

Nay ; were it so, we should be strong as they.

Crocus.

I often think how nice to be a Tree ;
Why, sometimes in their boughs the Stars I see.

First Violet.

Have you seen that ?

Crocus.

I have, and so shall you
But hush ! I feel the coming of the dew.

NIGHT.

Second Violet.

How bright it is ! the Trees, how still they are !

Crocus.

I never saw before so bright a Star
As that which stands and shines just over us.

First Violet (after a pause).

My leaves feel strange and very tremulous.

Crocus and Second Violet together.

And mine, and mine !

First Violet.

O warm, kind Sun, appear !

Crocus.

I would the stars were gone, and day were here !

JUST BEFORE DAWN.

First Violet.

Sister ! No answer, sister ? Why so still ?

One Tree to Another.

Poor little Violet, calling through the chill
Of this new frost which did her sister slay,
In which she must herself, too, pass away !
Nay, pretty Violet, be not so dismayed ;
Sleep only, on your sister sweet, is laid.

First Violet.

No pleasant Wind about the garden goes,
Perchance the Wind has gone to bring the Rose.
O sister ! surely now your sleep is done.
I would we had not looked upon the Sun.
My leaves are stiff with pain. O cruel night !
And through my root some sharp thing seems to bite.
Ah me ! what pain, what coming change is this ?

(She dies)

First Tree.

So endeth many a Violet's dream of bliss

A LAST HARVEST.

1891.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

I.—GO, SONGS OF MINE.

GO, songs of mine to bring her on her way
With whisperings of love ;
'Tis bleak March now, but then it shall be May,
With gentle skies above
And gentle seas below, what time she hears
Your little music chiming in her ears.

Cold, cold this day, and white the air with snow,
And dark this place wherefrom
My hastening music ever loves to go
To find its natural home,—
Its home with her to whom all charms belong ;
Who is both Queen of Love and Queen of Song.

Shall glad spring come ? Shall May come with
warm hours
And laughter of clear light,
And blossoming trees, and festivals of flowers,
And nightingales by night,
That pour their shuddering sweetness on the air,—
The music of an exquisite despair ?

And shall she come, who is my Spring of springs,—
Herself than May more fair ?
Sweet is the song the Night's sad songster sings ;
But her tones are more rare,—
Ah, shall she come, who is Spring and Summer in
one,—
To my sad life its star, its moon, its sun ?

II.—LOVE'S LOST PLEASURE-HOUSE.

LOVE built for himself a Pleasure-House,—
A Pleasure-House fair to see :
The roof was gold, and the walls thereof
Were delicate ivory.

Violet crystal the windows were,
All gleaming and fair to see ;
Pillars of rose-stained marble up-bore
That house where men longed to be.

Violet, golden, and white and rose,
That Pleasure-House fair to see
Did show to all ; and they gave Love thanks
For work of such mastery.

Love turned away from his Pleasure-House,
And stood by the salt, deep sea :
He looked therein, and he flung therein
Of his treasure the only key.

Now never a man till time be done
That Pleasure-House fair to see
Shall fill with music and merriment,
Or praise it on bended knee.

III.—FLOWER FAIRIES.

FLOWER fairies—have you found them,
When the summer's dusk is falling,
With the glow-worms watching round them ;
Have you heard them softly calling ?

Silent stand they through the noonlight,
In their flower shapes, fair and quiet ;
But they hie them forth by moonlight
Ready then to sing and riot.

I have heard them ; I have seen them,—
Light from their bright petals raying ;
And the trees bent down to screen them,
Great, wise trees, too old for playing.

Hundreds of them, all together,—
Flashing flocks of flying fairies,—
Crowding through the summer weather,
Seeking where the coolest air is.

And they tell the trees that know them,
As upon their boughs they hover,
Of the things that chance below them,—
How the rose has a new lover.

And the gay Rose laughs, protesting,
“Neighbor Lily is as fickle.”
Then they search where birds are nesting,
And their feathers softly tickle.

Then away they all dance, sweeping,
Having drunk their fill of gladness.
But the trees, their night-watch keeping,
Thrill with tender, pitying sadness ;

For they know of bleak December,
When each bough left cold and bare is,—
When they only shall remember
The bright visits of the fairies,—

When the roses and the lilies
Shall be gone, to come back never
From the land where all so still is
That they sleep and sleep forever.

SONNETS.

PHILIP BOURKE MARSTON.

I.—NOT THOU BUT I.

I T must have been for one of us, my own,
To drink this cup and eat this bitter bread.
Had not my tears upon thy face been shed,
Thy tears had dropped on mine ; if I alone
Did not walk now, thy spirit would have known
My loneliness ; and did my feet not tread
This weary path and steep, thy feet had bled
For mine, and thy mouth had for mine made moan ;
And so it comforts me, yea, not in vain,
To think of thine eternity of sleep ;
To know thine eyes are tearless though mine weep :
And when this cup's last bitterness I drain,
One thought shall still its primal sweetness keep,—
Thou hadst the peace and I the undying pain.

II.—NO DEATH.

I SAW in dreams a mighty multitude,—
Gathered, they seemed, from North, South, East,
and West,
And in their looks such horror was exprest
As must forever words of mine elude.
As if transfixed by grief, some silent stood,
While others wildly smote upon the breast,
And cried out fearfully, "No rest, no rest !"
Some fled, as if by shapes unseen pursued.
Some laughed insanely. Others shrieking, said :
"To think but yesterday we might have died ;
For then God had not thundered, 'Death is dead !'"
They gashed themselves till they with blood were red.
"Answer, O God ; take back this curse !" they cried,
But "Death is dead," was all the voice replied,

*III.—THE BREADTH AND BEAUTY OF THE
SPACIOUS NIGHT.*

THE breadth and beauty of the spacious night
Brimmed with white moonlight, swept by winds that blew
The flying sea-spray up to where we two
Sat all alone, made one in Love's delight,—
The sanctity of sunsets palely bright ;
Autumnal woods, seen 'neath meek skies of blue,
Old cities that God's silent peace stole through,—
These of our love were very sound and sight.
The strain of labor ; the bewildering din
Of thundering wheels ; the bells' discordant chime ;
The sacredness of art ; the spell of rhyme,—
These, too, with our dear love were woven in,
That so, when parted, all things might recall
The sacred love that had its part in all.

IV.—LOVE ASLEEP.

I FOUND Love sleeping in a place of shade,
And as in some sweet dream the sweet lips smiled ;
Yea, seemed he as a lovely, sleeping child.
Soft kisses on his full, red lips I laid,
And with red roses did his tresses braid ;
Then pure, white lilies on his breast I piled,
And fettered him with woodbine sweet and wild,
And fragrant armlets for his arms I made.
But while I, leaning, yearned across his breast,
Upright he sprang, and from swift hand, alert,
Sent forth a shaft that lodged within my heart.
Ah, had I never played with Love at rest,
He had not wakened, had not cast his dart,
And I had lived who die now of this hurt

Hardwick Drummond Rawnsley.

1850.

THE Rev. Hardwick Drummond Rawnsley is the second son of the Rev. R. D. B. Rawnsley, a Lincolnshire clergyman, a Fellow of Magdalen, and an early friend of Tennyson, his mother being a daughter of Sir Wellingham Franklin, a niece of Sir John Franklin, and a cousin of the late Laureate's wife. Mr. Rawnsley was born September 28th, 1850, at Shiplake-on-Thames, in the house from which Tennyson took his bride; and here he remained until the age of ten, when he went to live with his grandfather at the Old Rectory House, Halton Halegate, Spilsby, Lincolnshire. When he was eight he began to write verses, and continued to write them during his schooldays at Uppingham under his friend and godfather, the Rev. Edward Thring. From Uppingham, where he won fame as the writer of the school prize-poem, he proceeded to Balliol College, Oxford, and after graduating took holy orders, Bristol being the scene of his first clerical labours. While in this city he wrote and published "A Book of Bristol Sonnets" (1877), the first of various series of sonnets connected with different districts by which he is perhaps best known as a poet. A single selection from this volume will suffice to show that Mr. Rawnsley, even at this

early period, had become a competent craftsman. The following is entitled "Moon-thirst":—

"Who knows—yon ancient planet waterless,
Once swayed with ocean; yonder caves whence night
Not ever is dispelled, were swum with light,
And floods and verdurous mountains felt the stress
Of winds that smote the shining capes, to bless
Woodlands with power and ships with men of might:
While cloud-encircled and more softly bright
The moon walked on in gleaming spotlessness?
Now, cold of heart, and evermore accursed
With death, white ashes strewn upon her head,
Blind on her course the haggard phantom moves;
But fierce and unallayable her thirst,
To Earth's far seas in vain her hands are spread;
She strains to tilt the ocean cup she loves."

Reverence for Wordsworth prompted Mr. Rawnsley to accept the small living of Wray, Windermere; and he afterwards became—at the wish of Bishop Goodwin of Carlisle—Vicar of Crosthwaite, Keswick, where he now occupies the house of which Southey was at one time the tenant. "Sonnets at the English Lakes" was published in 1881, and it reached a second edition in the following year; in 1887 appeared "Sonnets round the Coast"; in 1890 "Poems, Ballads, and Bucolics"; and in 1893 "Valete: Tennyson and other Memorial Poems." Several other volumes have appeared from time to time, but it is upon the works enumerated that Mr. Rawnsley's reputation rests.

Like his early friend and critic, Charles Tennyson Turner, Mr. Rawnsley has chosen to cultivate mainly "the sonnet's scanty plot of ground"; and, though some of the ballads and other poems of the volume of 1890 are full of beauty, it is by his sonnets that he will probably be longest remembered. Turner's

art is at times more finished; the younger poet for example has written nothing so absolutely perfect as "The Lattice at Sunrise"; but in virtue of its prevailing objectiveness of theme and inevitable variety of impression Mr. Rawnsley's sonnet work has, we are inclined to think, more of impetus and momentum than that of the senior poet. To one section of his verse Wordsworth gave the title "Poems of Sentiment and Reflection": Mr. Rawnsley's most characteristic utterances might be described as "Sonnets of Observation and Reflection"; and the observing and reflecting faculties, being both raised to the imaginative plane, work in vital union. He is at his best when his inspiration comes from some clearly defined and outlined object of vision. First we have the object itself—a thing appealing to sensuous perception of form and colour, and in what may be called the draughtsmanship of poetic design Mr. Rawnsley is specially strong; but his observation is not *mere* observation, it is imaginative vision; and, while he gazes, the simple sense-impression is transfigured into an arresting image or an inspiring thought, as in the fine sonnet, "Service in the Old Parish Church, Whitby," which may be quoted here:—

"We climbed the steep where headless Edwin lies—
 The king who struck for Christ, and striking fell;
 Beyond the harbour, tolled the beacon bell;
 Saint Mary's peal sent down her glad replies;
 So entered we the Church: white galleries,
 Cross-stanchions, frequent stairs, dissembled well
 A ship's mid-hold,—we almost felt the swell
 Beneath, and caught o'erhead the sailors' cries.
 But as we heard the congregational sound,
 And reasonable voice of common prayer

And common praise, new wind was in our sails—
Heart called to heart, beyond the horizon's bound
With Christ we steered, through angel-haunted air,
A ship that meets all storms rides out all gales."

The most noticeable defect of Mr. Rawnsley's sonnet work is the result of a somewhat indiscriminating devotion to his favourite vehicle. When his sonnets fail, they fail because they ought not to be sonnets at all, but poems in some freer form. "We have heard," the present writer has elsewhere remarked, "of 'a metre-making argument,' and this, of course, must be present in every poem worthy of the name; but there is also a sonnet-making argument with which no sonnet can safely dispense. Some of Mr. Rawnsley's conceptions would have embodied themselves in bright lyrical or weighty elegiac stanzas. When expressed in sonnets they are not embodied but simply clothed, and if the truth must be told, the clothing is not always of the best fit." In the work of such a prolific sonneteer occasional lapses are, however, inevitable; and Mr. Rawnsley's successes deserve a place in the most select sonnet anthology. His ballads and other poems, though less known than the sonnets, are not less worth knowing. Most of them are celebrations of heroic deeds which have stirred the writer's heart and fired his imagination, and though they are rich in a fine sonorous rhetoric, they are clearly the work not of a mere rhetorician but of a poet. Some of the poems written in the Lincolnshire dialect, which has been made familiar by Lord Tennyson, have a vein of pleasant humour; and Mr. Rawnsley has written nothing that is not distinguished by elevation of feeling and grace of execution.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

SONNETS ROUND THE COAST.

1887.

HARDWICK DRUMMOND RAWNSLEY.

I.—PLYMOUTH HARBOUR—SUNDAY.

IS it not well that England sends her sons
From such proud harbours, such fair haunts as these,
To wage their battle with the roaring seas,
And shout for victory with their cloudy guns;
Here where the shifting wall of white foam runs
For ever Soundward, where baronial trees
Blend the waves' whisper with the hum of bees
And sweet church bells ring down their benisons?
Yes, when the sailor's heart is strung for fight
Thou, Edgecumbe, shalt be present in that hour,
The Hoe and Hamoaze, clear before his sight,
Shall nerve his arm and lend his spirit power;
And if he fall, yet falling will he smile,
Dead for the love of this his native Isle.

II.—CLEVELAND.

HOW free and fair the land from Esk to Tees,
Where Gower grew great, and Roger Ascham
strolled,
Where that old Bible-rhymer, cloistered, told
His Saxon tale to sound of Whitby seas.
Fragrant of salt, the sunny upland leas
To purple moors, by lines of hedge, are rolled;
The corn, plates all the seaward cliffs with gold,
And deep in streamlet hollows hide the trees.
Three harvests bless the labourer: fisher-sails
Hunt through the gleaming night the silver droves;
And though great Vulcan's stithy sweats and rings,
And men have bruised the hills and mined the coves,
Still by his long-backed farm the thatcher sings,
And in the barn is heard the sound of flails.

III.—AFTER THE HERRINGS, WHITBY.

THEY lie as they would never wake again,
Those weary fisher-boats, in slumber sound ;
But, as one sees at times a dreaming hound
Stir, and believe his phantom quarry slain,
Sudden they start, and soon the ocean plain
Is studded o'er with sails. Away they bound !
Some keen sea-hawk the silver drove has found ;
The wingèd huntsmen follow in her train.
With such an equal pace the swarthy keels,
Slipped from their moorings, hurry to the prey,
It seems as if the sky, the ocean, all
Move with their motion if they move at all ;
And like a dream the quiet pageant steals,
To melt into the far horizon's grey.

IV.—THE JET WORKER.

CLOSE prisoner in his narrow dusty room,
He bends and breathes above his whirring wheel ;
The treadle murmurs sad beneath his heel,
And sad he works his jewels of the tomb,
Emblems of sorrow from the darkened womb
Of woods on which the Deluge set its seal—
Offerings from death to death : he needs must feel
A little of his craft's incessant gloom.
But, as the pewter disk to brightness runs,
On Iris wings light shoots across the dusk,
And leaps out joyous from the heart of jet.
Lord of the Iris bow and thousand suns,
By wheels of work, if men will only trust,
In darkest souls Thy light and life are set.

POEMS, BALLADS, AND BUCOLICS.

1890.

HARDWICK DRUMMOND RAWNSLEY.

I.—DANIEL PERITON.

A BALLAD OF THE CONEMAUGH FLOOD.

Daniel Periton is believed to have seen the first signs of the breaking of the Conemaugh dam. He took horse and dashed madly down in front of the certain deluge-wave, into and through Johnstown, crying, "To the hills, to the hills!" He was overwhelmed by the oncoming flood, and perished in an heroic attempt to warn his fellow-townsmen of their peril.

THE windows of Heaven were open wide,
The storm cloud broke, and the people cried
Will Conemaugh dam hold out?

But the great folks down at Johnstown played,
They ate, they drank, they were nought afraid,
For Conemaugh dam holds Conemaugh lake,
By Conemaugh dam their pleasure they take,
Fine catching are Conemaugh trout.

The four mile lake at the back of its wall
Is growing to five, and the rains still fall,
And the flood by night and by day
Is burrowing deep thro' buttress and mound,
Fresh waters spring and spurt from the ground;
While God is thundering out of His cloud
The fountain voices are crying aloud,
Away to the hills! away!

Away to the hills! leave altar and shrine,
Away to the hills! leave table and wine,
Away from the trade and your tills;
Let the strong man speed with the weakest child,
And the mother who just on her babe has smiled
Be carried, leave only the dead on their biers,
No time for the tomb, and no time for tears;
Away, away to the hills!

Daniel Periton heard the wail
Of the waters gathering over the vale,
 With sorrow for city and field,—
Felt already the mountain quake
'Twixt living and dead. For the brethren's sake
Daniel Periton dared to ride
Full in front of the threatening tide,
 And what if the dam do yield ?

To a man it is given but once to die,
Though the flood break forth he will raise his cry
 For the thousands there in the town.
At least, some child may be saved by his voice,
Some lover may still in the sun rejoice,
Some man that has fled, when he wins his breath,
Shall bless the rider who rode thro' Death,
 For his fellows' life gave his own.

He leapt to his horse that was black as night,
He turned not left and he turned not right,
 Down to the valley he dashed ;
He heard behind him a thunderous boom,
The dam had burst and he knew his doom ;
"Fly, fly for your lives !" it was all he spoke,
"Fly, fly, for the Conemaugh dam has broke !"
 And the cataract after him crashed.

They saw a man with the God in his face,
Pale from the desperate whirlwind pace,
 They heard an angel cry.
And the steed's black mane was flecked as he flew,
And its flanks were red with the spur's red dew,
Into the city and out of the gate,
Rider and ridden were racing with fate,
 Wild with one agony.

"Flash on the news that the dam has burst,"¹
And one looked forth, and she knew the worst,

"My last message!" she said.

The words at her will flashed on before
Periton's call and the torrent's roar;
And not in vain had Periton cried,
His heart had caught a brave heart to his side,
As bold for the saving he sped.

The flood came down and its strong arms took
The city, and all together shook,

Tower and church and street.

Like a pack of cards that a player may crush,
The houses fell in the whirlpool rush,
Rose and floated and jammed at the last,
Then a fierce flame fed by the deluge blast
Wove them a winding sheet.

God have mercy! was ever a pyre
Lit like that of the flood's fierce fire!

Cattle and men caught fast,
Prisoners held between life and death,
While the flame struck down with its sulphurous breath,
And the flood struck up with its strong cold hand,
No hope from the water, no help from the land,
And the torrent thundering past!

Daniel Periton, still he rides,
By the heaving flank and the shortening strides,
The race must be well-nigh won.
"Away to the hills!" but the cataract's bound

¹ Miss Ogle, a telegraph clerk, saw the waters coming down on the town, and died at her post. "This is my last message"—so ran her telegram—but the message was unfinished, the waters overwhelmed her.

Has caught and has dashed him from saddle to ground, —
And the man who saw the end of the race,
Saw a dark dead horse, and a pale dead face.

Did they hear Heaven's great "Well done?"

II.—IN A GARDEN.

THE cowslip glowed, the tulip burned,
The grass was green as green could be ;
There, as in sweet content we turned,
Beneath the budding linden tree,
We saw the westerling sunbeams shake
Large glory o'er the mountain lake.

The cushat cooed, the blackbird's cry
About the terrace garden rang ;
Still as we wooed, my love and I,
The throstle still enraptured sang,
And still the waters danced with glee
Beneath the budding linden tree.

The tulips trembled still with flame,
The cowslips gleamed along the walk,
Yet, dear one, when the last word came
And silence only seemed to talk,
We looked and found the lake was gone,
Flowers dim, birds hushed, and one star shone.

Beloved ! by many an up and down,
O'er level lawns, unlevel ways,
Through weeds and flowers, when birds had flown,
And when birds sang, have passed the days
Since our new dawn forbade the night ;
But, lo ! o'erhead Love's star is bright.

Robert Louis Stevenson.

1850.

FEW living writers have been born with a literary gift so pure and decided as Robert Louis Stevenson, who first saw light at Edinburgh on the 13th of November, 1850. He came of a family distinguished for very different qualities. His father, Thomas Stevenson, was an engineer, whose name is associated with many improvements in lighthouse apparatus. It was his grandfather Robert who built the Bell Rock Lighthouse; his uncle Allan who built Skerryvore. Louis was brought up to the same profession, and carefully trained in mathematics and drawing, combined with work in a carpenter's shop, a brass foundry, and a woodyard; but nothing could extinguish that spark of literary imagination which was kindled at his birth. At the age of six he dictated a "History of Moses"; he started a magazine at nearly all his schools; and at the Edinburgh University he took more interest in "The Speculative Society" than in all his work for the Science degree. Nevertheless, he obtained a prize from the Society of Arts for an improvement in lighthouse apparatus; and it was not till he came of age that he confessed to his father that he cared for nothing but literature. That this confession was not made without pain is evident from the beautiful

verses which form his *apologia* for abandoning the traditions of his family.

“Say not of me that weakly I declined
The labours of my sires, and fled the sea,
The towers we founded and the lamps we lit,
To play at home with paper like a child.
But rather say : *In the afternoon of time
A strenuous family dusted from its hands
The sands of granite, and beholding far
Along the sounding coast its pyramids
And tall memorials catch the dying sun,
Smiled well content, and to this childish task
Around the fire addressed its evening hours.*”
“Underwoods,” xxxviii.

He now, at the wish of his father, read for the Bar, in order that he might have some position in case he did not succeed as an author. He was called in 1875 after some delay caused by ill-health and a winter at Mentone, but after a few briefs the attempt to combine law and literature was altogether abandoned.

During that winter at Mentone he composed the first two of his printed papers. The first (“Roads”) appeared in the *Portfolio* signed L. S. Stoneven, the second (“Ordered South”) in *Macmillan*.¹ In a letter written to a friend in America in 1887 he says that the latter took him nearly three months to write, and adds, “I imagine nobody had ever such pains to learn a trade as I had ; but I slogged at it day in and day out ; and I frankly believe (thanks to my dire industry) I have done more with smaller gifts than almost any man of letters in the world.” All will agree, at least, that he “learnt his trade,”

¹ Reprinted in *Virginitus Puerisque*.

and the appearance in 1878 of his first book—"An Inland Voyage"—established his reputation as a master in the art of words. In the same year were composed many of the best of his shorter stories, including "Providence and the Guitar" and the first of the "New Arabian Nights," which were begun at Burford Bridge Inn, continued at London, Edinburgh, Paris, Barbizon, and finished at La Monastier. The name of this place recalls the "Travels with a Donkey," a book which may be said to close the first period of his literary career. He was always delicate, and nights spent in "God's green caravan-serai," however stimulating to the imagination, were little calculated to strengthen his health, but still more grievous injury was done thereto in 1879 by a voyage to California as an emigrant. Since then the greater part of his life has been spent at health-resorts or in travelling in search of health. "The Treasure Island," begun at Braemar, was finished at Davos; to Bournemouth belong "Kidnapped" and "Dr. Jekyll"; to Hyères, "Prince Otto" and "The Silverado Squatters"; and with other good gifts of recent years the "Master of Ballantrae" (that strongest and bitterest fruit of his genius) has come to us from the South Sea Islands, where he still lingers to the regret of his many friends. All things have, however, their compensations; in exile he has found health, and it was in California that he found his wife, Fanny Van de Grift Osbourne, his helpmeet in all things, including literature.

The poems of Louis Stevenson have also been written in divers places. The charming "Song of the Road," which expresses the very spirit of his life and genius, is dated from the Forest of Montargis,

the Horatian address "To a Gardener" from Hyères, those not less classical lines to Mrs. William H. Low from Paris, "In the States" from San Francisco, and there are few places where he has lived for long without writing verse. This means unfortunately that there are few such places where he has not been ill, for, with the exception perhaps of his last volume of "Ballads," he has never made a serious business of his poems, but has done them at odd moments and generally when unfit for his ordinary work. To this cause, however to be regretted, they owe at least one charm, which separates them distinctly from most of modern poetry—they are quite unprofessional, written not for fame and scarcely for art, but rather for the sake of love and friendship. So they are not only full of his individuality, which may be said of all his work, but they are pure expressions of his very self, fragments of autobiography which no future chronicler of his life should disregard.

It is not easy to test the lyrical gifts of one who has not attempted to show us the full measure of them. The level of his flight is limited by his subjects which are often of a slight and occasional character, and his more emotional verses are marked by restraint, sometimes approaching severity, reminding us rather of the cold clear chisel of a Landor than the deep-dyed pencil of a Keats. Of this temper are his stately verses to his father, to W. E. Henley, to N. V. Le G. S., to the cousin who once also lived in Arcadia,—verses which enshrine not only love but high regard and deep human sympathy. When he is most personal as in the poems which concern himself or most affectionate

as in the lines to his mother or his nurse, his tone is always far removed from common familiarity. If his verses are not always perfect in their rhythm they are frequently dignified in movement, and always fresh and just in diction. The but partial success of his longer ballads may seem to mark one limit to his poetical range, but even if we take his poems written "in Scots" only, this range must be allowed to be considerable. The true joy of life that inspires "'A mile an' a bittock,' the vivid satire of the 'Blast' and the 'Counter-blast,' the racy character of 'A Lowden Sabbath Morn,'" the lilt and feeling of "It's an owercome sooth for age an' youth," are alike rare in kind and degree; no one could have written these poems without an unusually fine sense of the value of verse as a special means of expression.

These remarks are applicable to the volume "Underwoods," published in 1887, but the other volume, "A Child's Garden of Verses," published in 1885, is outside the ordinary course of criticism. It is unique in English literature, and judgment fails from lack of comparison. It was not only written *for* children, but written *by* one, who though grown up to man's estate is no less a child. To him the memory of his nursery days is so vivid that he can recall the very mould of childish thought, the very mode of its utterance. We who fail to preserve such clear images of that early world can at least remember enough to testify to the accuracy of the pictures.

We have all known how hard it is "to go to bed by day" and see the long procession of "Young Night Thoughts":

“Armies and Emperors and Kings
All carrying different kinds of things
And marching in so grand a way
You never saw the like by day.”

Most of us have gone through many times that awful
“North-West Passage” to the land of Nod, with the
terrible escort of

“The shadow of the balusters, the shadow of the lamp
The shadow of the child which goes to bed—
All the wicked shadows coming tramp, tramp, tramp,
With the black night overhead”—

We have all played at soldiers and ships and other
games of “make-believe,” but few of us have been
stirred by an imagination so quick and delicate and
alive, and a thirst for enterprise so keen and romantic.
He was, indeed, a very pirate in his cradle. But he
was also a good little boy who knew that

“A child should always say what’s true,
And speak when he is spoken to,
And behave mannerly at table,
At least as far as he is able.”

And it is not the least value of this precious volume
that it is quickened by the two main spirits of
Stevenson’s genius, the love of adventure and the
love of home.

The “Ballads” published in 1890 are remarkable
for their bold semi-Homeric treatment of some
legends of the South Sea Islands. The volume
contains a poem in his best style called “Christmas
at Sea” quoted in the following pages.

COSMO MONKHOUSE.

A CHILD'S GARDEN OF VERSES.

1885.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

I.—BED IN SUMMER.

I N winter I get up at night
And dress by yellow candle-light.
In summer, quite the other way,
I have to go to bed by day.

I have to go to bed and see
The birds still hopping on the tree,
Or hear the grown-up people's feet
Still going past me in the street.

And does it not seem hard to you,
When all the sky is clear and blue,
And I should like so much to play,
To have to go to bed by day?

II.—THE SUN'S TRAVELS.

THE sun is not a-bed, when I
At night upon my pillow lie;
Still round the earth his way he takes,
And morning after morning makes.

While here at home, in shining day,
We round the sunny garden play,
Each little Indian sleepy-head,
Is being kissed and put to bed.

And when at eve I rise from tea,
Day dawns beyond the Atlantic Sea,
And all the children in the West,
Are getting up and being dressed.

III.—THE LAND OF COUNTERPANE.

WHEN I was sick and lay-a-bed,
I had two pillows at my head,
And all my toys beside me lay
To keep me happy all the day.
And sometimes for an hour or so
I watched my leaden soldiers go,
With different uniforms and drills,
Among the bed-clothes through the hills ;
And sometimes sent my ships in fleets
All up and down among the sheets ;
Or brought my trees and houses out,
And planted cities all about.
I was the giant great and still
That sits upon the pillow hill,
And sees before him, dale and plain,
The pleasant land of counterpane.

IV.—FOREIGN LANDS.

UP into the cherry-tree
Who should climb but little me ?
I held the trunk with both my hands
And looked abroad on foreign lands.
I saw the next door garden lie,
Adorned with flowers, before my eye,
And many pleasant places more
That I had never seen before.
I saw the dimpling river pass
And be the sky's blue looking-glass ;
The dusty roads go up and down
With people tramping in to town.

If I could find a higher tree
Farther and farther I should see,
To where the grown-up river slips
Into the sea among the ships,
To where the roads on either hand
Lead onward into fairyland,
Where all the children dine at five,
And all the playthings come alive.

V.—MY SHADOW.

I HAVE a little shadow that goes in and out with me,
And what can be the use of him is more than I
can see ;

He is very, very like me from the heels up to the head ;
And I see him jump before me, when I jump into my bed.

The funniest thing about him is the way he likes to
grow—

Not at all like proper children, which is always very
slow.

For he sometimes shoots up taller like an india-
rubber ball,

And he sometimes gets so little that there's none of
him at all.

He hasn't got a notion of how children ought to play,
And can only make a fool of me in every sort of way.
He stays so close beside me, he's a coward you can see ;
I'd think shame to stick to nursie as that shadow
sticks to me !

One morning very early, before the sun was up,
I rose and found the shining dew on every buttercup ;
But my lazy little shadow, like an arrant sleepy-head,
Had stayed at home behind me and was fast asleep
in bed.

UNDERWOODS.

1887.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

(BOOK I.—IN ENGLISH.)

I.—*ENVOY.*

(I.)

GO, little book, and wish to all
Flowers in the garden, meat in the hall,
A bin of wine, a spice of wit,
A house with lawns enclosing it,
A living river by the door,
A nightingale in the sycamore !

II.—*A SONG OF THE ROAD.*

(II.)

THE gauger walked with willing foot,
And aye the gauger played the flute ;
And what should Master Gauger play
But *Over the hills and far away.*

Whene'er I buckle on my pack,
And foot it gaily in the track ;
O pleasant gauger, long since dead,
I hear you fluting on ahead.

You go with me the self-same way—
The self-same air for me you play ;
For I do think and so do you,
It is the tune to travel to.

For who would gravely set his face
To go to this or t'other place ?
There's nothing under Heav'n so blue
That's fairly worth the travelling to.

On every hand the roads begin,
And people walk with zeal therein ;
But wheresoe'er the highways tend,
Be sure there's nothing at the end.

Then follow you, wherever hie
The trembling mountains of the sky :
Or let the streams in civil mode
Direct your choice upon a road ;

For one and all, or high or low,
Will lead you where you wish to go ;
And one and all go night and day
Over the hills and far away !

III.—IT IS THE SEASON NOW TO GO.

(IV.)

IT is the season now to go
About the country high and low,
Among the lilacs hand in hand,
And two by two in fairy land.

The brooding boy, and sighing maid,
Wholly fain and half afraid,
Now meet along the hazel'd brook
To pass and linger, pause and look.

A year ago, and blithely paired,
Their rough-and-tumble play they shared ;
They kissed and quarrelled, laughed and cried,
A year ago at Eastertide.

With bursting heart ; with fiery face,
She strove against him in the race ;
He unabashed her garter saw,
That now would touch her skirts with awe.

Now by the stile ablaze she stops,
And his demurer eyes he drops ;
Now they exchange averted sighs
Or stand and marry silent eyes.

And he to her a hero is,
And sweeter she than primroses ;
Their common silence dearer far
Than nightingale and mavis are.

Now when they sever wedded hands,
Joy trembles in their bosom-strands,
And lovely laughter leaps and falls
Upon their lips in madrigals.

IV.—THE HOUSE BEAUTIFUL.

(v.)

*A NAKED house, a naked moor, ·
A shivering pool before the door,
A garden bare of flowers and fruit,
And poplars at the garden foot :
Such is the place that I live in,
Bleak without and bare within.*

Yet shall your ragged moor receive
The incomparable pomp of eve,
And the cold glories of the dawn
Behind your shivering trees be drawn ;
And when the wind from place to place
Doth the unmoored cloud-galleons chase,
Your garden gloom and gleam again,
With leaping sun, with glancing rain.
Here shall the wizard moon ascend
The heavens, in the crimson end
Of day's declining splendour ; here
The army of the stars appear,

The neighbour hollows, dry or wet,
Spring shall with tender flowers beset ;
And oft the morning muser see
Larks rising from the broomy lea,
And every fairy wheel and thread
Of cobweb dew-bediamonded.
When daisies go, shall winter time
Silver the simple grass with rime ;
Autumnal frosts enchant the pool,
And make the cart-ruts beautiful ;
And when snow-bright the moor expands,
How shall your children clap their hands !
To make this earth, our hermitage,
A cheerful and a changeful page,
God's bright and intricate device
Of days and seasons doth suffice.

V.—TO A GARDENER.

(VII.)

FRIEND, in my mountain-side demesne,
My plain-beholding, rosy, green,
And linnet-haunted garden-ground,
Let still the esculents abound.
Let first the onion flourish there,
Rose among roots, the maiden fair,
Wine scented and poetic soul
Of the capacious salad-bowl.
Let thyme the mountaineer (to dress
The tinier birds) and wading cress,
The lover of the shallow brook,
From all my plots and borders look.
Nor crisp and ruddy radish, nor
Peas-cods for the child's pinafore
Be lacking : nor of salad clan,
The last and least that ever ran

About great nature's garden-beds.
Nor thence be missed the speary heads
Of artichoke ; nor thence the bean
That gathered innocent and green
Outsavours the belauded pea.

These tend, I prithee ; and for me,
Thy most long-suffering master, bring
In April, when the linnets sing,
And the days lengthen more and more,
At sundown to the garden door.
And I, being provided thus,
Shall, with superb asparagus,
A book, a taper, and a cup
Of country wine, divinely sup.

VI.—REQUIEM.

(xxi.)

UNDER the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie.
Glad did I live and gladly die,
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me :
Here he lies where he longed to be ;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

VII.—THE SICK CHILD.

(xxvi.)

Child.

O MOTHER, lay your hand on my brow !
O mother, mother, where am I now ?
Why is the room so gaunt and great ?
Why am I lying awake so late ?

Mother.

Fear not at all: the night is still.
Nothing is here that means you ill.
Nothing but lamps the whole town through,
And never a child awake but you.

Child.

Mother, mother, speak low in my ear,
Some of the things are so great and near,
Some are so small and far away,
I have a fear that I cannot say.
What have I done, and what do I fear,
And why are you crying, mother dear?

Mother.

Out in the city, sounds begin
Thank the kind God, the carts come in!
An hour or two more, and God is so kind,
The day shall be blue in the window-blind,
Then shall my child go sweetly asleep,
And dream of the birds and the hills of sheep.

(BOOK II.—IN SCOTS.)

VIII.—A MILE AN' A BITTOCK.

(IV.)

A MILE an' a bittock, a mile or twa,
Abüne the burn, ayont the law,
Davie an' Donal' an' Cherlie an' a',
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!
Ane went hame wi' the ither, an' then
The ither went hame wi' the ither twa men,
An' baith wad return him the service again,
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!
The clocks were chappin' in house an' ha',
Eleeven, twal an' ane an' twa;
An' the guidman's face was turnt to the wa',
An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

A wind got up frae affa the sea,
 It blew the stärs as clear's could be,
 It blew in the een of a' o' the three,
 An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

Noo, Davie was first to get sleep in his head,
 "The best o' frien's maun twine," he said;
 "I'm weariet, an' here I'm awa' to my bed."
 An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

Twa o' them walkin' an' crackin' their lane,
 The mornin' licht cam gray an' plain,
 An' the birds they yammert on stick an' stane,
 An' the müne was shinin' clearly!

O years ayont, O years awa',
 My lads, ye'll mind whate'er befa'—
 My lads, ye'll mind on the bield o' the law,
 When the müne was shinin' clearly.

IX.—"IT'S AN OWERCOME SOOTH."

(xvi.)

IT'S an owercome sooth for age an' youth
 And it brooks wi' nae denial,
 That the dearest friends are the auldest friends
 And the young are just on trial.

There's a rival bauld wi' young an' auld
 And it's him that has bereft me;
 For the sürest friends are the auldest friends
 And the maist o' mines hae left me.

There are kind hearts still, for friends to fill
 And fools to take and break them;
 But the nearest friends are the auldest friends
 And the grave's the place to seek them.

BALLADS.

1890.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

CHRISTMAS AT SEA.

THE sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand ;
The decks were like a slide, where a seaman scarce could
stand,

The wind was a nor'-wester, blowing squally off the sea ;
And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lea.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break of day ;
But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw how ill we lay.
We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a shout,
And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by to go about.

All day we tacked and tacked between the South Head and
the North ;

All day we hauled the frozen sheets, and got no further forth ;
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,
For very life and nature we tacked from head to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide-race roared ;
But every tack we made we brought the North Head close
aboard ;

So 's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers running
high,

And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass against his
eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam ;
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'longshore
home ;

The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volleyed out ;
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial cheer ;
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the year)
This day of our adversity was blessed Christmas morn,
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where I
was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces there,
My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver hair ;
And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of homely elves
Go dancing round the china-plates that stand upon the shelves.

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of me,
Of the shadow on the household and the son that went to sea ;
And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind of way
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessed Christmas Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to fall.
"All hands to loose topgallant sails," I heard the captain call.
"By the Lord, she'll never stand it," our first mate Jackson
cried.

. . . "It's the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson," he replied.

She staggered to her bearings, but the sails were new and good,
And the ship smelt up to windward just as though she under-
stood.

As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of the night,
We cleared the weary headland, and passed below the light.

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but me,
As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out to sea ;
But all that I could think of, in the darkness and the cold,
Was just that I was leaving home and my folks were growing
old.

Michael Field.

MICHAEL FIELD has published several volumes of plays : in 1884, "Callirhœ" and "Fair Rosamund"; in 1885, "The Father's Tragedy," "William Rufus," and "Loyalty or Love?" in 1886, "Brutus Ultor"; in 1887, "Canute the Great" and "The Cup of Water"; in 1890, "The Tragic Mary"; in 1892, "Stephania." She has also published three volumes of lyrics, entitled "Long Ago" (1889), "Sight and Song" (1892), "Under the Bough" (1893), besides poems in various journals and magazines, with a few pieces of prose. It is upon her tragedies that Michael Field can most justly rest a claim to distinction; the form of poetry in which the least excellence has been shown by English poets during the last and the present centuries. A careful student of the matter might come to the conclusion, that the best tragedies of the century have been written, either by poets not of the first order, or by poets of the first order, whose best work is not dramatic in form. Whether or no Michael Field be a poet of the first order, at least few poets of our century, with powers equal to hers, have found in tragedy the one form most congenial to their imagination. The palmary virtue of her tragedies we take to be their conception, and their treatment, of the ruling passions, and the dominant ideas of men and women. Many tragedians

labour to express that in human nature, which is uncommon; and that in human fortunes, which is unusual. And this they do, not because by such means they can best bring to light the deep and radical passions, or ideas, of men, but for the sake of strangeness and of novelty. No one acquainted with the great Greek and English masterpieces of tragedy can condemn the tragic usage of what is uncommon or unusual; but he perceives that Sophocles and Shakespeare, each after his kind, concluded all under law; the sorrows of *Œdipus* and of *Lear* bear witness to something more lasting, and more universal, than themselves. It is the peculiar note or mark of Michael Field, that her tragedies have a profound spirit of this sort; yet a spirit very peculiar to themselves. In all her plays there is an appeal to man's ruling passions and to his dominant ideas but to passions and to ideas of one special kind. The appeal is always made to those human instincts, which are traditional, or inherited, or innate; not to passions from without, creatures of circumstance, or of chance. The motherhood of earth, with its deep and personal appeal; the claims of patriotism, with its holiness and its commanding sanction; the necessities of a man's nature struggling to work out its destiny in fulfilment of inherited desires; all passions, instincts, and ideas which come from sources far off in the past history of a man, a race, a country, or which come from sources deeply rooted in one human soul: these are the materials of Michael Field. It might almost seem as though these tragedies, so full of this vehement and vigorous spirit, could only proceed from this age: an age in which history is concerned with the social com-

binations of men ; science, with organic life ; and studies of every kind, with origins, with developments, and with vital forces. Wordsworth, wishing to show how secluded and simple country lives can yet be tragic, wrote :—

“ Amid the groves, under the shadowy hills,
The generations are prepared : the pangs,
The internal pangs, are ready ” ;

those great lines express with perfect accuracy the tragic genius, the tragic attitude, of Michael Field : the words “ prepared ” and “ ready,” in their fulness of meaning, might have been chosen by her. Again, Shakespeare’s yet greater lines, where he imagines—

“ . . . the prophetic soul
Of the wide world, dreaming on things to come,”

in like manner remind us of Michael Field ; of the way in which, once more to quote Wordsworth, she conceives of Brutus or of Canute, as Christian king and Roman consul, each hearing—

“ . . . some still response,
Sent by the ancient Soul of this wide land,
The Spirit of its mountains and its seas,
Its cities, temples, fields, its awful power,
Its rights and virtues.”

That which a man of science, some master of the comparative method in history or in anthropology, would term a tendency, is for Michael Field a tragic motive : and thus she acts well upon that lofty definition of poetry, that it is “ the impassioned expression, which is the countenance of all science,” and also “ the breath and finer spirit of all knowledge.” And this very power of hers gives to her a fine simplicity of purpose and of construction : a scene here, a speech there, this or that character and phrase, may some-

what offend us; but never, in point of intention or design. Here we may touch upon the literary execution of Michael Field's plays. In their virtues and in their vices, they are Elizabethan: the virtues are many, the vices are few. It will serve to indicate the admirable strength and beauty of Michael Field's expression at its highest, if we make a bold comparison. Lear, in the most tragic and pitiful lines of Shakespeare, cries to the winds and storms:—

“Nor rain, wind, thunder, fire, are my daughters:
I tax not you, you elements, with unkindness
I never gave you kingdoms, called you children,
You owe me no subscription; why then, let fall
Your horrible pleasure; here I stand, your slave,
A poor, infirm, weak, and despised old man;—
But yet I call you servile ministers,
That have with two pernicious daughters joined
Your high engendered battles, 'gainst a head
So old and white as this. O! O! 'tis foul!”

It is reasonable to think that England will never give birth to a second Shakespeare; it is unreasonable to hold that no one can possibly catch anything of his spirit. Michael Field, at her highest point of excellence, writes with an imagination, an ardour, a magnificence, in degree far lower, in kind not other, than the imagination, the ardour, the magnificence of Shakespeare. In witness of this great claim, let us point to such passages as the last scene of “William Rufus,” with the speeches of Beowulf, the blinded Saxon peasant; to the third scene of “Fair Rosamund,” with the speeches of Queen Elinor; to the fourth scene of “Canute,” where Gunhild the Norse prophetess, confronts the king; to the scene of Coresus' death in “Callirhoe”; to the fourth act of “The Father's Tragedy,” with the speech of starving

Rothsay. And these passages are not brilliant, chance felicities, purple patches of composition ; they are central, or final passages, in which the writer's imagination becomes intense, and quickens into its most perfect form. And, the very faults or vices of Michael Field's manner proceed from a laudable impulse ; every phrase must be characteristic, there must be no commonplace, no sign of flagging. Hence come certain violences of expression, audacities and extravagancies, Elizabethan in style, but without the justification of Elizabethan dramatists. They had no traditions of English tragedy behind them ; tragic verse was new, the classics were new, life itself was new, and all the romance and adventurous spirit of the world. Their extravagance, whether of careful Euphuism or of careless energy, was in equal measure an extravagance of ignorance, of inexperience. But in Michael Field, there is too often a deliberate style of mistaken ingenuity and force. Yet no reader, in whatever degree he felt this effect, could feel that it vitiated an entire play ; the extravagance is merely verbal, never one of conception. It may also be, that this less happy style is the result of the peculiar spirit of these plays, and not only of Elizabethan influence. The cumbrous magnificence of Æschylus, ridiculed by Aristophanes, came of his vast and mysterious conceptions : the singular difficulty of Sophocles came of his subtle and quick conceptions. Just so may this occasional infelicity of Michael Field come of her love for, of her occupation with, those primitive or radical conceptions, the strength of which is expressed in struggle and in conflict. A certain fierceness and savagery are perceptible, in even the

gentler and the more pitiful of Michael Field's characters; as the poor and the simple are apt, under emotion, to speak in language of more than common beauty or strength, so do the men and women of these plays; and we must not be too hasty in concluding, that what may be a proper stroke of imagination, is but an inartistic mannerism. For, after all, Michael Field's writing expresses character, it is characteristic. Perhaps certain modern readers or writers, who might see nothing but praise in that expression, would see nothing but blame, did we exchange "characteristic" for "moral." It is a curious delusion of our times, that the words ethical and moral are taken to mean didactic and doctrinal; a lamentable, if also a ludicrous, mistake. Does a poet preach virtue or vice? In either case, he is didactic. Does he exhibit the lives, the actions, the virtues, or the vices, of men? He is moral. A poet, who tells the truth of things, whose imagination is true, may present the lives of men in their complexity, their suffering, their desire, with no word of doctrine or of advice, and his work will be inevitably moral; full of character, from his work, glad or sorrowful, pleasant or painful, the reader will inevitably learn something; he will learn something of the laws of life. This, indeed, is all that Arnold meant by his famous definition of literature; literature deals with life, as it appears to thought; poetry deals with life, as it appears to imagination; and imagination is the harmony of emotion and thought. It is this that Aristotle held in his poetics; where character with plot, that is, man in the struggle of life, is presented as the subject for tragedy, with all the ornaments of musical speech,

Certainly, the plays of Michael Field bear the tests of Arnold and of Aristotle: "radiant, adorned, outside," they are; they have also "a hidden ground of thought and of austerity within."

The lyrical poems of the volume, "Long Ago," are suggested each by a fragment of Sappho. Many of them have the grace and charm of the Greek Anthology; but, since Catullus failed in translating Sappho, it is no reproach to Michael Field that she has composed some exquisite verses, but has not brought Sappho back to us. Indeed, Michael Field is not always happy in her lyrics and sonnets; they are apt to be too full of bold phrases and of struggling thoughts, which cannot contain themselves within their bounds. But in this age of finished pettiness and prettiness in poetry, it is a great thing to excel in the more arduous tasks. Not that a perfect lyric is anything but a rare and fine achievement, only the greatest poets can write a perfect lyric. But so many living poets, unable to produce lyrics of the highest excellence, still persist in their attempt, and produce innumerable lyrics of a poor quality, that the sight of a poet, grappling with the labours of tragedy, is an inspiring and a welcome sight. And much of Michael Field's dramatic verse, in her pastoral or more delicate scenes, has all the grace and charm of a lyrical imagination. The scenes of the faun in "Callirhœe," of the fairies in "Fair Rosamund," are instances of a quaint and pathetic beauty.

One word, before conclusion, may be said about the historical character of the plays. All, but two, are concerned with history; all of the historical plays, but three, are concerned with British history.

Following, in this too, a great tradition, Michael Field has composed plays upon subjects from Greece and Rome; but she has most frequently chosen the great chronicles or stories of our own land. In these, she has exercised a free discretion of treatment, caring rather for truth of spirit, and of substance, than of the accidents and of the letter. Thus, in "William Rufus" and in "Canute," historical fact is little altered; but, as the dramatist tells us, it was the sight of the New Forest and of the Eastern Fens, that largely helped to inspire and to mould those tragedies of the Norman, the Saxon, and the Dane. The poet, no less than the Platonic philosopher, should be "a spectator of all time and of all existence"; and art is independent of social and national limits; but a poet is under no prohibition against patriotism; and to write historical plays, fine in art and fine in feeling, is to do good service for his country.

LIONEL JOHNSON.

CALLIRHOË.

1884.

MICHAEL FIELD.

MACHAON AND THE FAUN.

(ACT III., SCENE VI.)

A Plot of Grass in a Wood.

[FAUN *dancing and singing.*]

Faun. I DANCE and dance ! Another faun,
A black one, dances on the lawn.

He moves with me, and when I lift
My heels, his feet directly shift.

I can't out-dance him, though I try ;
He dances nimbler than I.

I toss my head, and so does he ;
What tricks he dares to play on me !

I touch the ivy in my hair ;
Ivy he has and finger there.

The spiteful thing to mock me so !

I will outdance him ! Ho ! ho ! ho !

Machaon [*behind the trees*]. A sight to shake the
stiffest sides on earth !

'Twould force a misanthrope to hang a smile

Upon his lip, as dew-drop on a thorn.

Plutus beholding this would fill with noise

Of laughter all the hollow of his voice,

So exquisitely laughable it is.

'Tis one of nature's jokes she's mistress of.

The little fool

Tries to outcaper his own shadow. Ha !

With what a pettish energy he springs,

His forelock nodding to his sportive heels.

Thus man toils oft for the Impossible,

With earnest foolishness and sorry end.

But here's a jocund close to hopeless toil !

He's lying all a-grin because he lies
Upon his shadow, which he reckons caught.
Ha! ha! The very sediments of mirth
Are stirred throughout my nature. This gay knave
I'll question. [*Parting the trees.*]

Faun. Ha! ha! ha!

Machaon. What have you caught?
Something philosophers themselves can't seize
With all their definitions. We'll revere
One who has caught himself, and at his feet
Sit like small scholars. [*FAUN offers to run away.*]
Nay, you shall not go!
I'll make you talk first. You're a funny thing!

Faun. Oh, let me go! I'll bite! Oh, let me go!

Machaon. A natural philosopher, I see,
Apt with his mouth. I want to hear you talk.
For lies you are not keen enough. Methinks
The innocence of truth hath never fled
This simple mouth, though like a nested bird
It soon gets feathers, and betakes itself
Even from infant lips. Come, sit you down.

Faun. No! no!

Machaon. Down with you. Why, you're
on the shade
That danced with you. He's under you! Sit firm!
There's my good knave; you see I mean no harm;
And when you've told me all I want to hear,
Then dance away within the sun again!

Faun. I will not dance.

Machaon. No sulks; I'll have no sulks.
Come, tell me what you are, whether a boy
Or but a boyish creature.

Faun. I'm a faun.

Machaon. And what is that?

Faun. Why, 'tis a faun

Machaon.

Just so.

But then you're not a boy ?

Faun.

I am a faun.

Machaon. His slow conception blocks my questions up.

Well, can you tell me how you were begot ?

Dropt from the womb of Nature, I should say ;

Or had you once a mother ?

Faun.

I'm a faun.

Machaon. A truism, my rustic sage ! But how
Did you become a faun ?—I'll try plain phrase.—
Cannot you tell

Aught of your childhood,—of the time, I mean,
When you were smaller ?

Faun.

Oh, I danced as now,

And crushed the acorn-cups, and ran the deer,
Sucked the ripe mulberries, tossed the chestnuts up,
As I do now, and . . .

Machaon.

Yes, I understand.

—O Eloquence, the tongue of Love, appeal
To cherished memories of simple things,
And thou art on the silliest of lips
That never move to reason !—Then you've lived
Your life in woods ; or is this very wood
Its one green limit ?

Faun.

Once I found the trees
Grow few, so few, like hyacinths in June,
Which made me very sorry ; then, I saw
Grass without any shade on which I ran.
But then did I grow frightened, for I'm sure
The shade cares for me, and will keep me safe.
And I ran back.

Machaon.

Poor little fool ! I shrink
Thus from a new aspect of life, before
Unknown. I cannot run away, like you,
To shades of ignorance to hide amaze.

Have you got any human qualities ?

Speak, are you quite inhuman ?

Faun.

I'm a faun.

Machaon. Like all the world, he doth repeat himself,
Making an adage stuff the holes of thought.

Yet I'm too rough, through grief's ill-timed assault.

You dance and talk, both actions of the man,

And yet there's something in you I can't fit

Into humanity. I can't tell what.

Faun [*offering to jump up*]. Now I may go !

Machaon. Stop ! Tell me, can you love ?

Faun. I love Coresus.

Machaon.

Ah ! and you love him !

What do you know of him ?

Faun.

He's kind to me.

Machaon. The knowledge of a brute. I hoped for more.
What ! from this simpleton.—He loved your wood ?

Faun. He loves it, and he often plays with me, . . .

Machaon. How dull are the unfearing to suspect !

Faun. And bends the bough of the high fir for reach
Of my hand wanting cones, and then he strokes
The smooth back of a deer, and binds its neck
With ivy-leaves, at which, oh, how I laugh !
And then he laughs, and then I clap my hands.

Machaon. Hast thou seen any in the woods to-day ?

Faun. Two, with their noses on a mossy root,
That looked at me, and . . .

Machaon.

I meant any man.

Hast thou seen man or maiden in these glades ?

Faun. No ! no ! He has not come so long a time.
When will he come again ?

Machaon.

No more, no more

—I'd better spell the manuscript of Death
To these untutored ears. This ignorance
So blessed in the present may afflict

The future, with its wonder unallayed,
That growing drearily, at last becomes
The brutish misery that never knows.
—He's dead.

Faun. Does that mean that he's angry with me?
Oh, I'll be good,
If he will come again, and not be *dead*!

Machaon. He'll melt my manhood! It is strange, most
strange;
The tongue of knowledge wags with sounding phrase:
Set ignorance to question, and it straight
Declines to lisp. I am childish-mouthed
Before this unschooled creature.—Come to me.
You will not? Nay, but I must have you near
If I'm to tell you what we mean by *dead*.
—I make too solemn preparations,
(Oh, cruel priestcraft of my tender dread!)
He's frightened. Brevity but cuts the flesh
Of our anxieties; prolixity
Tears it. So I'll be brief.—
You said that you were sorry when in June
The hyacinths drop away?

Faun. Yes.

Machaon. When they're gone.
You cannot get them back again?

Faun. I can.
Not for a while, but then their streaky buds
Shoot up, and soon they're all with me again.

Machaon. Ah! I must give a better rendering
From Death's old bone-grey parchment.—Right, you're right!
The hyacinths blue the ground spring after spring,
Although with different flowers from those you bunched
In grasp too small last year. For oft your hands
Are greedy with the flowers?

Faun. No, for they look

Long-faced and tired, and do not smile at me
As when they stick straight up out of the ground.

Machaon. A thread to guide me, through the labyrinth
Of his simplicity and ignorance,
To the mid-chamber, dark and windowless,
Where understanding lies ! The tired flowers
Grow ugly, lose
All likeness to the bells you jerked about
So merrily when they were purple ?

Faun.

Yes.

When they grow tired, I lay them on the grass ;
I love to lie upon the grass when tired,
And then they go.

Machaon. That going I call Death.

Faun. But then they come again, quite fresh and gay.
But I am tired, tired, tired !

Machaon. The thread is snapt, the labyrinthine way
Blocked up with dulness.—Yet you want to know
Wherefore Coresus cannot play with you ?

Faun. Oh yes !

Machaon. Then tell me, did you ever love
One deer above the rest ?

Faun.

Oh yes !

Machaon.

—His yawn

Is to my heart's pain most medicinal.
Tire often blunts the edge of sorrow's sword.—
And did it ever cease to follow you ?

Faun. One day it followed ; then lay down ; then up
It got, and followed as I ran before.
At last it lay, and would not stir, for all
I tickled its soft skin with chestnut-leaves.
It lay, and . . .

Machaon. It was *dead* !

Faun [*shuddering*]. It grew a heap
More nasty than an ant-hill, for it smelt !

Machaon. He knows the alphabet of Death : my task
To make the grim idea creep through the signs
As snake through blades of grass. Yes, I must form
The sentence of man's doom, and teach to him.

Faun. I hate the wood about it ; never dance,
Or even go there.

Machaon. It was *dead*.

Faun. Perhaps
It's right again ; I never go to see.

Machaon. I tell you it was *dead*.

Faun. Then it *was* dead.

Machaon. How shall I lift the lid of his mind's chest,
And empty it of Hope's sweet silver form
That's been its tenant and glad prisoner ? —
Coresus thus is dead :

Just like your deer ; dead, dead, just like your deer.
—He's all a-tremble ; yet his frightened thought
Still dares a vain resistance, like a girl
Who whips the captor's arms. Ah me, ah me !
I dare not comfort him while still he doubts ;
Silence is unbelief's best battle-field.—

Faun [*in a whisper*]. And is he brown and nasty, like
the deer ?

Machaon. I can't pollute his memory with *Yes* !
No, no. But he can talk no more, nor move,
Nor ever come to play with you again.

Faun. He'll come with the next hyacinths !

Machaon. No, no !
You never, never will be with him more,
Or play with him again.

Faun. Oh-o-h-h !

Machaon. Belief
At last fills up the doorway of his doubt.—
My boy !—A sob is coming, and the face

Looks older now its lines of joy are bent
To sorrow's converse will.

[FAUN *rolls on the grass and sobs.*

Nay, do not cry.

Look, here's a cone. I'll pick you cones, and play.
—O Death, how like a cruel step-mother,
You always put your spite in every joy!
You've torn a great hole in the happiness
Of this quiet happy creature, which no stitch
Of Time will mend completely.

Faun.

Dead, dead, dead!

Coresus, don't be dead!

Machaon.

I've got a cone;

I'll give it you. There! try to love me, boy!

Faun. Coresus dead! Oh, oh! Dead like the deer.
The horrid deer that lay and smelt! Oh, oh!
Coresus dead like that?

Machaon.

You'll love me?

Faun.

No.

Perhaps the deer's all right! I'll see! I'll see!

For then Coresus will be all right too! [Exit.

Machaon. Go, have thy foolish way. Thy tears are dry;
I will not raise their flood-gate for the world.
Deception is the ivy of the mind:

I've cut

Its roots at his small brain, and it may hang

Greenly about it for a little while

Before it withers. I must budge, must hence.

Poor youngster! Here's the very place his back

Made in the moss. Would he could lie and laugh

The shadow o' Death uncaught! So Truth can curse:

I thought not it could put its sacred tongue

To such a use. Heigh-ho! From this time forth

He'll have a different laugh. I must be gone! [Exit.

CANUTE THE GREAT.

1887.

MICHAEL FIELD.

CANUTE AND GUNHILD.

(FROM ACT I., SCENE IV.)

Re-enter HARDEGON with GUNHILD.

Hardegon. AT his learning !
Deal with him, spare him not.

Canute. Whom hast thou brought ?
A brooding fæce, with windy sea of hair,
And eyes whose ample vision ebbs no more
Than waters from a fiord. I conceive
A dread of things familiar as she breathes.

Gunhild. O king.

Canute. Ay, Scandinavia.

Gunhild. He sees
How with a country's might I cross his door ;
How in me all his youth was spent, in me
His ancestors are buried ; on my brows
Inscribed is his religion ; through my frame
Press the great, goading forces of the waves.

Canute. Art thou a woman ?

Gunhild. Not to thee. I am
Thy past.

Canute. Her arms are knotted in her bosom
Like ivy-stems. What does she here, so fixed
Before my seat ?

Gunhild. Harken ! I wandered out
Among the break-fern, and the upright flags,
And snatching brambles, when the sun was gone,
And the west yellow underneath the night.

A fir-bough rolled its mass athwart my way,
With a black fowl thereon. All eve I stood
And gathered in your fate. You raise your hands
To other gods, you speak another tongue
You learn strange things on which is Odin's seal
That men should know them not, you cast the billows
Behind your back, and leap upon the horse.
You love no more the North that fashioned you,
The ancestors whose blood is in your heart:—
These things you have forgotten.

Canute. Yes.

Gunhild. But they
Will have a longer memory. Alas,
The mournfulness that draws about my breasts!
Woe, woe! There is a justice of the Norn,
Who sings about the cradle.

Canute. Speak thy worst.

[*Aside, rising and pacing apart.*] How different
my queen! How liberal
The splendour of her smile! This woman's frown
Is tyrannous. So will my country look,
When I sail back next year; for I shall feel
A dread, a disappointment, and a love
I loathe, it comes up from so deep a well,
Where I am sod and darkness.

Gunhild. At thy birth
Sang Urd of foregone things, of thy wild race,
Of rocks and fir-trees that for ages past
Stood in thy native bounds, of creeping seas,
That call thy countrymen to journey forth
Among strange people; and her song went on
As flesh was woven for thee in the womb;
It cannot be forgotten, for she sang
Beginnings.

Canute. O grey-headed tyrannies
Of yore, I will escape you.

Gunhild. Verily,
They have requital. Thou wilt get a child :
Will it not draw from the deep parts of life ;
Will it not take of thee that disposition,
Old as the hills, and as the waterfall,
Whose foam alone was ever seen by man ?
Thou wilt produce a being of thy past,
And all thy change avail not.

Hardegon. How these women
Can sing foundations !

Canute. If in those I breed
It work no blessing, to myself this new,
Unsettled energy within my brain
Is worth all odds. I cannot understand
Half that is meeting me. Go hence, your face
Is sheer confusion to me ; it brings back
The load of ignorance, the brutishness,
The fetters of nativity.

Gunhild. I go :
But wrathful leave behind me what was told
When the crow bent from the swirled plume of fir,
And held me like a statue.

Canute. O my past,
I loved thine aspect once, but now my mind
Drives thee away. It seems to me that thought
Is as a moving on along the air --
I cannot yet find language. You oppress,
And hinder me ; but when I brood alone,
Hope stirs, and there is tumult of a joy,
That flashes through my nature, like a sword,
Cutting the knots.

Gunhild. Oh, indestructible

Are the first bonds of living. Fare thee well.
Thou wilt engender thine own ancestry ;
Nature will have her permanence.

Canute. And I
Will have my impulse.

Gunhild. Oh, the blue fir-bough,
The bird, the fern, and iris at my feet !
The whole world talks of birth, it is the secret
That shudders through all sap. [*Exit.*

Canute. She turns away
With rigid shoulders, and is vanishing
For ever. 'Tis in wrestles with her like
We are transformed.

[*To HARDEGON.*] Call Edric, do you hear !
And say no other word as you would live ;
My temper will not bear it. [*Exit HARDEGON.*]

THE TRAGIC MARY.

1890.

MICHAEL FIELD.

(ACT IV., SCENE V.)

BOTHWELL'S SOLILOQUY.

(BOTHWELL *rises and stands straight up without the least motion.*)

Bothwell. THIS woman! Somewhere she has
pledged my soul;
We have drunk wine together on some bare,
Brown hill of chaos, while the wanton lights,
Young meteors flaming lawless through the heaven
Peered at our rampant revel. We were one
Before the stars were broken to their spheres;
Part of the huge, unsevered element
When day and darkness hugged. I know that far
Below the rise of rivers, underneath
The sowing of the mine's unfathomed seed,
There was this sunken bond. She flings me now
Contempt, my lass! my lass! What should we find
In woman but the lavish side of God,
Before the thought of judgment crippled Him,
When He was soft, creative, fostering, free?
Contempt, contempt! Night's stinging moments spin,
And stir me to an act: the regicides
With their dismaying weapons shall have done
By far less intimate irreverence
On majesty than I in person dare.
Hell will be puzzled what to do with such
As I shall show myself, it has no code
That can entangle me, no quarter builded

That might immure my unimagined courage,
No flames to equal mine. The royal witch,
She sought to disenchant me in the guise
Of formal coldness, she the beauty, she
The madding, unfoiled beauty. How the air
Dreads me, I breathe on lion-like! She has said
She needs no convoy! I will furnish one:
She must with me the merry, downward way,
Where demons cackle. I will meet my bride
At Fouldsbrigg with an army. This contempt
Is an infectious plague! [*Exit by outside door.*]

LYRICS.

MICHAEL FIELD.

I.—A SUMMER WIND.

O WIND, thou hast thy kingdom in the trees,
And all thy royalties
Sweep through the land to-day.
It is mid June,
And thou, with all thy instruments in tune,
Thine orchestra
Of heaving fields and heavy swinging fir,
Strikest a lay
That doth rehearse
Her ancient freedom to the universe.
All other sound in awe
Repeats its law :
The bird is mute; the sea
Sucks up its waves; from rain
The burthened clouds refrain,
To listen to thee in thy leafery,
Thou unconfined,
Lavish, large, soothing, refluent summer wind.

II.—BELOVED.

MORTAL, if thou art beloved
Life's offences are removed ;
All the fateful things that checked thee,
Hearten, hallow, and protect thee.
Grow'st thou mellow ? What is age ?
Tinct on life's illumined page,
Where the purple letters glow
Deeper, painted long ago.

What is sorrow ? Comfort's prime,
Love's choice Indian summer clime.
Sickness !—thou wilt pray it worse
For so blessed, balmy nurse.
And for death ! when thou art dying
'Twill be Love beside thee lying.
Death is lonesome ? Oh, how brave
Shows the foot-frequented grave !
Heaven itself is but the casket
For Love's treasure, ere he ask it,—
Ere with burning heart he follow,
Piercing through corruption's hollow.
If thou art beloved, oh then
Fear no grief from mortal men.

III.—YEA, GOLD IS SON OF ZEUS.

(FROM "LONG AGO," XXXVI.)

YEA, gold is son of Zeus : no rust
Its timeless light can stain ;
The worm that brings man's flesh to dust
Assaults its strength in vain :
More gold than gold the love I sing,
A hard, inviolable thing.

Men say the passions should grow old
With waning years ; my heart
Is incorruptible as gold,
'Tis my immortal part :
Nor is there any god can lay
On love the finger of decay.

Alice Meynell.

ALICE C. MEYNELL is the younger of two daughters of the late Mr. T. J. Thompson, her elder sister (now Lady Butler) being the distinguished painter of "The Roll Call," and other remarkable pictures of military life and action. Mr. Thompson's name is familiar to all readers of Forster's "Life of Charles Dickens" as that of one of the great novelist's most intimate friends; and his daughters in their childhood and youth were provided not merely with the ordinary acquirements of an adequate home education, but with those ampler and subtler aids to a large culture, given by sojourn and residence among the historic sites and art centres of the continent. In Miss Alice Thompson the intellectual and the spiritual instincts seem to have awakened early and simultaneously. While engaged in the writing of her girlish verses she was also pondering the problems which never lose their power of appeal to earnest spirits, and the result of her pondering was that while still a girl she was received into the Roman Catholic Church, into which the young convert was followed by the elder members of her family. In the year 1875 Miss Alice Thompson published the volume entitled "Preludes," illustrated by her sister's drawings. The material success of the slender book was greater than that

attained by the maiden efforts of most young and unknown poets ; but its true success was that made manifest by the verdicts of the few who spoke not as irresponsible reviewing scribes, but as men having authority. Mr. Ruskin wrote emphatically, "The last verse of that perfectly heavenly 'Letter from a Girl to her own old age,' the whole of 'San Lorenzo's Mother,' and the end of the sonnet, 'To a Daisy,' are the finest things I have yet seen or felt in modern verse." Nor was the praise of poets wanting. "A most genuine little book of poems, containing sonnets of true spiritual beauty. I must send it to you," wrote Dante Rossetti to Mr. Hall Caine, who adds : "He took to it vastly." He knew by heart, and was fond of repeating the "Renunciation" sonnet, which, according to Mr. William Sharp, he ranked as one of the three finest sonnets written by women. "The little book," again Rossetti wrote, "is all deep-hearted speech. Besides being beautiful, it is equal almost throughout, and full of artistic charm." Mr. Browning, after reading in an indifferent notice some extracts from the poems, "conceived the desire to read the rest for myself," which he did "with real pleasure," being "struck by their beauty," he tells us, "even beyond what the indifference of the reviewer should have prepared me for." Mr. Aubrey de Vere—the friend of Wordsworth—was the young poet's earliest intimate acquaintance among men of letters, and by him she was introduced to Mr. Coventry Patmore and Lord Tennyson. In 1877 Miss Alice Thompson was married to Mr. Wilfrid Meynell, the editor of the *Weekly Register* and *Merry England*.

During the years which have elapsed since her

marriage, Mrs. Meynell has uttered her thought and vision in various forms—chiefly in essay writing, which, by reason of the constructive imagination always to be found in it, has a certain creative quality, but of her singing voice she has been all too frugal ; and though she has from time to time during the decade of 1880-90, contributed to ephemeral literature some brief strain of penetrating music, these later melodies remain uncollected, and her place in the Victorian choir has, practically, to be determined by the poems of her early maidenhood which compose the volume of "Preludes." There are few living poets who would suffer less than Mrs. Meynell from a provisional estimate based exclusively on adolescent performances. Of what is ordinarily called crudity—the quality of artistic work in which the power of adequate execution lags behind the power of inspiring conception—there is hardly any trace whatever, even in those poems which we may guess to be of earliest date. There is, indeed, a marked prevalence of maturity, and we miss it only in a very few poems where the singing, so to speak, dominates, and tends to overpower the song,—that is, where the instinctive lyrical impulse is not reinforced by a sufficient body of thought or emotion, and where, consequently, the momentum of the motive is more or less exhausted prior to the exhaustion of the singing impulse itself. Elsewhere than in these infrequent pages, Mrs. Meynell's verse recalls the memorable passage in which Mr. Pater speaks of poetry and all other representative arts as aspiring towards the condition of music, in which the distinction between matter and form, between the thing expressed and the manner of its artistic

expression, is all but obliterated ; that is, it is work in which the informing thought, emotion, or sentiment is not clothed in an imaginative vesture, but rather incarnated in an imaginative body, from the life of which its own life is inseparable. The motives of her poems are neither obvious nor far-fetched ; they never quite lack the charm of things familiar, and yet they always possess the charm of things that are new, not with the novelty of inherent strangeness, but with the finer, rarer novelty of strongly individualised apprehension and presentation. In her landscape the poet sees what we ourselves have seen, but sees it with a difference that at once recalls and supplements our own remembrance ; in her moods of emotion or reflection she feels and thinks as we may have thought or felt, and yet by the imaginative individuality of the thinking or feeling gives to the utterance of it a certain uniqueness which touches us to delightful surprise. Here and there, as in "A Young Convert," "A Meditation," or "A Letter from a Young Girl to her own old age" the mere burden of the poem has a separate interest and impressiveness of its own, but the special character of her work is given to it by that perfect co-ordination of body and spirit always found in either picture or poem, which is of imagination all compact. Greater poets than Mrs. Meynell are still with us,—greatness is not the word suggested by her winning achievement ; but few of our generation have exhibited in more finely balanced harmony the qualities in virtue of which essential poetry is what it is.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

PRELUDES.

1875.

ALICE C. MEYNELL.

I.—SAN LORENZO GIUSTINIANI'S MOTHER.

"And we the shadows of the dream."—SHELLEY.

I HAD not seen my son's dear face
 (He chose the cloister by God's grace)
Since it had come to full flower-time.
I hardly guessed at its perfect prime,
That folded flower of his dear face.

Mine eyes were veiled by mists of tears
When on a day in many years
One of his order came. I thrilled
Facing, I thought, that face fulfilled.
I doubted, for my mists of tears.

His blessing be with me for ever !
My hope and doubt were hard to sever.
—That altered face, those holy weeds.
I filled his wallet and kissed his beads,
And lost his echoing feet for ever.

If to my son my alms were given
I know not, and I wait for Heaven.
He did not plead for child of mine,
But for another Child divine,
And unto Him it was surely given.

There is one alone who cannot change ;
Dreams are we, shadows, visions strange ;
And all I give is given to one.
I might mistake my dearest son,
But never the Son who cannot change.

II.—BUILDERS OF RUINS.

WE build with strength the deep tower-wall
That shall be shattered thus and thus.
And fair and great are court and hall,
But *how* fair—this is not for us,
Who dimly feel the want of all.

We know, we know how all too bright
All hues of ours though dimmed through tears,
And how the marble gleams too white ;—
We speak in unknown tongues, the years
Interpret everything aright,

And crown with weeds our pride of towers,
And warm our marble through with sun,
And break our pavements through with flowers,
With an Amen when all is done,
Knowing these perfect things of ours.

O days, we ponder, left alone,
Like children in their lonely hour,
And in our secrets keep your own,
As seeds the colour of the flower.
To-day they are not all unknown,

The stars that 'twixt the rise and fall,
Like relic-seers, shall one by one
Stand musing o'er our empty hall ;
And setting moons shall brood upon
The frescoes of our inward wall.

And when some midsummer shall be,
Hither will come some little one
(Dusty with bloom of flowers is he),
Sit on a ruin i' the late long sun,
And think, one foot upon his knee.

And where they wrought, these lives of ours,
So many-worded, many-sóuled,
A North-west wind will take the towers,
And dark with colour, sunny and cold,
Will range alone among the flowers.

And here or there, at our desire,
The little clamorous owl shall sit
Through her still time ; and we aspire
To make a law (and know not it)
Unto the life of a wild briar.

We have a perfect purpose, dear,
Though from our consciousness 'tis hidden.
Thou, time to come, shalt make it clear,
Undoing our work ; we are children chidden
With pity, and smiles of many a year.

Who shall allot the praise, and guess
What part is yours and what is ours ?—
O years that certainly will bless
Our flowers with fruits, our seeds with flowers,
With ruin all our perfectness.

Be patient, Time, of our delays,
Too happy hopes, and wasted fears,
Our faithful ways, our wilful ways.
Solace our labours, O our seers
The seasons, and our bards the days ;

And make our pause and silence brim
With the shrill children's play, and sweets
Of those pathetic flowers and dim,
Of those eternal flowers my Keats
Dying felt growing over him.

III.—IN EARLY SPRING.

“L’océan connu, l’âme reste à sonder.”—VICTOR HUGO

O SPRING, I know thee ! Seek for sweet surprise
In the young children’s eyes.

But I have learnt the years, and know the yet
Leaf-folded violet.

Mine ear, awake to silence, can fortell
The cuckoo’s fitful bell.

I wander in a grey time that encloses
June and the wild hedge-roses.

A year’s procession of the flowers doth pass
My feet, along the grass.

And all you sweet birds silent yet, I know
The notes that stir you so,

Your songs yet half devised in the dim dear
Beginnings of the year.

In these young days you meditate your part ;
I have it all by heart.

I know the secrets of the seeds of flowers
Hidden, and warm with showers,

And how, in kindling Spring, the cuckoo shall
Alter his interval.

But not a flower or song I ponder is
My own, but memory’s.

I shall be silent in those days desired
Before a world inspired.

O dear brown birds, compose your old song-phrases,
Earth, thy familiar daisies.

The poet mused upon the dusky height,
Between the stars towards night,
His purpose in his heart. I watched, a space,
The meaning of his face ;

There was the secret, fled from earth and skies,
Hid in his grey young eyes.
My heart and all the Summer wait his choice,
And wonder for his voice.
Who shall foretell his songs, and who aspire
But to divine his lyre ?
Sweet earth, we know thy dimmest mysteries,
But he is lord of his.

IV.—PARTED.

“Come vedi, ancor non m’abbandona.”—DANTE.

FAREWELL to one now silenced quite,
Sent out of hearing, out of sight,—
My friend of friends, whom I shall miss.
He is not banished, though, for this,—
Nor he, nor sadness, nor delight.

Though I shall walk with him no more,
A low voice sounds upon the shore.
He must not watch my resting-place
But who shall drive a mournful face
From the sad winds about my door ?

I shall not hear his voice complain,
But who shall stop the patient rain ?
His tears must not disturb my heart,
But who shall change the years, and part
The world from every thought of pain ?

Although my life is left so dim,
The morning crowns the mountain-brim ;
Joy is not gone from summer skies,
Nor innocence from children’s eyes,
And all these things are part of him.

He is not banished, for the showers
Yet wake this green warm earth of ours.
How can the summer but be sweet ?
I shall not have him at my feet,
And yet my feet are on the flowers.

V.—TO THE BELOVED DEAD.

A LAMENT.

BELOVED, thou art like a tune that idle fingers
Play on a window-pane.
The time is there, the form of music lingers ;
But O thou sweetest strain,
Where is thy soul ? Thou liest i' the wind and rain.
Even as to him who plays that idle air,
It seems a melody,
For his own soul is full of it, so, my Fair,
Dead, thou dost live in me,
And all this lonely soul is full of thee.
Thou song of songs !—not music as before
Unto the outward ear ;
My spirit sings thee inly evermore,
Thy falls with tear on tear.
I fail for thee, thou art too sweet, too dear.
Thou silent song, thou ever voiceless rhyme,
Is there no pulse to move thee,
At windy dawn, with a wild heart beating time,
And falling tears above thee,
O music stifled from the ears that love thee ?
Oh, for a strain of thee from outer air !
Soul wearies soul, I find.
Of thee, thee, thee, I am mournfully aware,
—Contained in one poor mind,
Who wert in tune and time to every wind.

Poor grave, poor lost belovèd ! but I burn
For some more vast To be.
As he that played that bootless tune may turn
And strike it on a lyre triumphantly,
I wait some future, all one lyre for thee.

*VI.—A LETTER FROM A GIRL TO HER OWN
OLD AGE.*

“Lete vedrai.”—DANTE.

LISTEN, and when thy hand this paper presses,
O time-worn woman, think of her who blesses
What thy thin fingers touch, with her caresses.

O mother, for a weight of years do break thee !
O daughter, for slow time must yet awake thee,
And from the changes of my heart must make thee.

O fainting traveller, morn is grey in heaven.
Dost thou remember how the clouds were driven ?
And are they calm about the fall of even ?

Pause near the ending of thy long migration,
For this one sudden hour of desolation
Appeals to one hour of thy meditation.

Suffer, O silent one, that I remind thee
Of the great hills that storm the sky behind thee,
Of the wild winds of power that have resigned thee.

Know that the mournful plain where thou must wander,
Is but a grey and silent world, but ponder
The misty mountains of the morning yonder.

Listen ; the mountain winds with rain were fretting,
And sudden gleams the mountain-tops besetting.
I cannot let thee fade to death, forgetting.

What part of this wild heart of mine I know not
Will follow with thee where the great winds blow not,
And where the young flowers of the mountain grow not.

Yet let my letter with thy lost thoughts in it
Tell what the way was when thou didst begin it,
And win with thee the goal when thou shalt win it.

Oh, in some hour of thine my thoughts shall guide thee.
Suddenly, though time, darkness, silence hide thee,
This wind from thy lost country flits beside thee ;

Telling thee : all thy memories moved the maiden,
With thy regrets was morning over-shaden,
With sorrow thou hast left, her life was laden.

But whither shall my thoughts turn to pursue thee ?
Life changes, and the years and days renew thee.
Oh, Nature brings my straying heart unto thee.

Her winds will join us, with their constant kisses
Upon the evening as the morning tresses,
Her summers breathe the same unchanging blisses.

And we, so altered in our shifting phases,
Track one another 'mid the many mazes
By the eternal child-breath of the daisies.

I have not writ this letter of divining
To make a glory of thy silent pining,
A triumph of thy mute and strange declining.

Only one youth, and the bright life was shrouded.
Only one morning, and the day was clouded.
And one old age with all regrets is crowded.

Oh, hush ; oh, hush ! Thy tears my words are steeping.
Oh, hush, hush, hush ! So full, the fount of weeping ?
Poor eyes, so quickly moved, so near to sleeping ?

Pardon the girl ; such strange desires beset her.
Poor woman, lay aside the mournful letter
That breaks thy heart ; the one that wrote, forget her.

The one that now thy faded features guesses,
With filial fingers thy grey hair caresses,
With morning tears thy mournful twilight blesses.

VII.—AN UNMARKED FESTIVAL.

“Benedetto sia'l giorno e'l mese e l'anno,”—PETRARCA.

THERE'S a feast, undated, yet
Both our true lives hold it fast,—
The first day we ever met.
What a great day came and passed !
—Unknown then, but known at last.

And we met ; you knew not me,
Mistress of your joys and fears ;
Held my hand that held the key
Of the treasure of your years,
Of the fountain of your tears.

For you knew not it was I,
And I knew not it was you.
We have learnt, as days went by.
But a flower struck root and grew
Underground, and no one knew.

Day of days ! Unmarked it rose,
In whose hours we were to meet,
And forgotten passed. Who knows,
Was earth cold, or sunny, sweet,
At the coming of your feet ?

One mere day, we thought ; the measure
Of such days the year fulfils.
Now, how dearly would we treasure
Something from its fields, its rills,
And its memorable hills ;

—But one leaf of oak or lime,
Or one blossom from its bowers
No one gathered at the time.
Oh, to keep that day of ours
By one relic of its flowers !

VIII.—SONG.

AS the inhastening tide doth roll,
Dear and desired, upon the whole
Long shining strand, and floods the caves,
Your love comes filling with happy waves
The open sea-shore of my soul.

But inland from the seaward spaces,
None knows, not even you, the places
Brimmed, at your coming, out of sight,
—The little solitudes of delight
This tide constrains in dim embraces.

You see the happy shore, wave-rimmed,
But know not of the quiet dimmed
Rivers your coming floods and fills,
The little pools 'mid happier hills,
My silent rivulets, over-brimmed.

What, I have secrets from you ? Yes.
But O my Sea, your love doth press
And reach in further than you know,
And fills all these ; and when you go
There's loneliness in loneliness.

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

ALICE C. MEYNELL.

I.—THE MODERN POET.

A SONG OF DERIVATIONS.

I COME from nothing : but from where
Come the undying thoughts I bear ?
Down through long links of death and birth
From the past poets of the earth.
My immortality is there.

I am like the blossom of an hour ;
But long long vanished sun and shower
Awoke my breath in the young world's air.
I track the past back everywhere,
Through seed and flower, and seed and flower.

Or I am like a stream that flows
Full of the cold springs that arose
In morning lands, in distant hills ;
And down the plain my channel fills
With melting of forgotten snows.

Voices I have not heard possessed
My own fresh songs ; my thoughts are blessed
With relics of the far unknown ;
And, mixed with memories not my own,
The sweet streams throng into my breast.

Before this life began to be,
The happy songs that wake in me
Woke long ago and far apart.
Heavily on this little heart
Presses this immortality.

II.—MY HEART SHALL BE THY GARDEN.

“Questo ne’ patti nostri, Amor, non era.”

LORENZO DE’ MEDICI.

MY heart shall be thy garden. Come, my own,
Into thy garden ; thine be happy hours
Among my fairest thoughts, my tallest flowers,
From root to crowning petal, thine alone.

Thine is the place from where the seeds are sown
Up to the sky enclosed, with all its showers.
But ah, the birds, the birds ! Who shall build bowers
To keep these thine ? O friend, the birds have flown.

For as these come and go, and quit our pine
To follow the sweet season, or, new-comers,
Sing one song only from our alder-trees,

My heart has thoughts, which, though thine eyes hold mine
Flit to the silent world and other summers,
With wings that dip beyond the silver seas.

III.—RENOUNCEMENT.

I MUST not think of thee ; and, tired yet strong,
I shun the love that lurks in all delight—

The love of thee—and in the blue Heaven’s height,
And in the dearest passage of a song.

Oh, just beyond the sweetest thoughts that throng

This breast, the thought of thee waits hidden yet bright,

But it must never, never come in sight ;

I must stop short of thee the whole day long.

But when sleep comes to close each difficult day,

When night gives pause to the long watch I keep,

And all my bonds I need must loose apart,

Must doff my will as raiment laid away,—

With the first dream that comes with the first sleep

I run, I run, I am gathered to thy heart.

Eric Mackay.

1851.

ERIC MACKAY is the son of the late Dr. Charles Mackay, so well known for his songs of labour and other poems, and was born in London, January 25th, 1851. He was educated in Scotland, and subsequently passed many of his youthful years in Italy, where he studied the great Italian masters of song, who have left their impression upon him. The son's genius, however, is very different in type from that of the father. Eric Mackay is, perhaps, more of the artist and less of the bard ; he depends rather more on elaboration of form than on strong and stirring interpretation of common feelings, wants, and longings. He is more self-conscious and less spontaneous. Nevertheless, he represents a tendency of the present day, and appeals to a growing class, and thus has a significance and a place of his own.

Eric Mackay is a poet with distinct individuality, if of comparatively narrow range. He shows keenness and power in presenting what we may call single lines of emotion, with no little art in varying the point of view from which these are contemplated, and by happy devices of lyrical forms, and varied and not seldom subtle rhythms, secures such interest as, but for this, would often seem foreign to his subject matter in itself. He is artistic ; and, if not

sensuous, we may with safety say that he delights in following up varied phases of one passion within a limited range, and in showing their bearing on the development of other gifts, as for instance, music, painting, etc. He certainly does not touch a jarring lyre, but his lyre, up to a comparatively recent period, seemed to have but a few strings, at once tense and sweet, however, which he touched with cultured and delicate skill rather than with free flowing, spontaneous inspiration.

These remarks, I think, characterise with truth, if not with complete exhaustiveness the two volumes titled "Love Letters of a Violinist," and "A Lover's Litanies,"—both of which are really more remarkable for certain technical qualities—*nuances* of metre and finish, than for broad grasp, or even for depth or dramatic apprehension. He needs, to excite his genius, something that is already through association and exercise beautified by a radiance derived from some gift and aspiration outside itself; and putting aside altogether the question of what in relation to his work has been somewhat wrong-headedly named "erotic," we find the individualising element to lie here—love touched by his muse is, almost always coloured, modified by ambition or aspiration, which gives, as it were, the set and general character to it.

"Gladys the Singer," which came between these two poems, is noticeable for its metrical skill as well as for its fancy and invention—in its movement now and then it recalls Keats, though there is no conscious imitation: it is full of beauty and high thought.

Such later pieces as "The Choral Ode to Liberty,"

however, show enlarging sympathies in certain directions : a keen clear view of the inspirations that may be derived from a study of disinterested actions, directed by high patriotic impulses. These stanzas have the *ictus* and piercing-clear, flute-like note, which could only come from broad and quickened sympathy running abreast with true imaginative feeling, and the nicest sense of artistic form.

Such pieces again as "Mary Arden," and "Beethoven at the Piano" suggest possibilities in other directions—suggest, indeed, that Mr. Mackay may yet pass to treatment of passion and character under dramatic forms ; that he needs but somewhat larger experience and the mellowing effects of time to enable him to enter into a larger atmosphere, to possess a wider kingdom. In the sonnet form he has done some good work, though the pale cast of over-elaboration is sometimes felt.

In much of his earlier verses, indeed, we feel as if the poet had been experimenting merely—carefully, thoughtfully endeavouring to find the subject and the style that were best fitted for the expression of his genius. In a case like this such works take on a new colour in the light of that to which they were the prelude or overture, precisely (to take the case most universally known)—as the sonnets of Shakespeare are now of immeasurable value to us, because we can trace how the writer of them grew into the author of the dramas. It is on this account that we should be disinclined to criticise with merely dogmatic exaction poems which promise so much, and which, judged by themselves, despite the effort to gain at once something of loftier unity and truer variety, partake rather of the nature of miniatures

or of cameos in relation to an oil-painting, or to a piece of sculpture than anything else.

In 1891 Mr. Eric Mackay published a dramatic work entitled "*Nero and Actæa*," a very fine study of the conflict of influences in the Roman world, when Christianity first began to make itself felt. Nero prefers Actæa, a Greek slave, to Poppæa; and finally contrives to murder his wife as he had murdered others before her. A venerable Christian, whom Actæa succeeds in saving from death, is the only creature from whom, in the end, after Nero has lost all hold on Rome, he can seek protection; and in the crises the movement and tragic colouring are admirably maintained. The gradual rise of adverse powers and combinations against Nero is skilfully suggested and traced in truly dramatic style; and the closing scene in which the final doom falls on the monster is at once finely and strongly conceived. Everywhere dialogue is carefully used in view of action. Indeed, the whole play is a very skilful reproduction, whilst the movement of the blank verse is easy, flowing—familiar and dignified alternating with unobtrusive art. Unlike many literary dramas, it seems to us that it would need very little modification to make it suitable for the stage—a point which, doubtless, the author had in view; and in Poppæa and Actæa—so finely contrasted in many ways—as well as in Sigellinus and Anselmus ample verge would be given for the expression of character and individuality in the actors.

ALEX. H. JAPP.

POEMS.

ERIC MACKAY.

(“LOVE LETTERS OF A VIOLINIST,” IX.)

I.—TO-MORROW.

O LOVE! O Love! O Gateway of Delight!
Thou porch of peace, thou pageant of the prime
Of all God's creatures! I am here to climb
Thine upward steps, and daily and by night
To gaze beyond them, and to search aright
The far-off splendour of thy track sublime.
For, in thy precincts, on the further side,
Beyond the turret where the bells are rung,
Beyond the chapel where the rites are sung,
There is a garden fit for any bride.
O Love! by thee, by thee are sanctified
The joys thereof to keep our spirits young.
By thee, dear Love! by thee, if all be well—
And we be wise enough to own the touch
Of some bright folly that has thrill'd us much—
By thee, till death, we may regain the spell
Of wizard Merlin, and in every dell
Confront a Muse, and bow to it as such.
Love! Happy Love! Behold me where I stand
This side thy portal, with my straining eyes
Turn'd to the Future. Cloudless are the skies,
And, far adown the road which thou hast spann'd,
I see the groves of that elected land
Which is the place I call my paradise.
But what is this? The plains are known to me;
The hills are known, the fields, the little fence,
The noisy brook as clear as innocence,
And this old oak, the wonder of the lea,
Which stops the wind to know if there shall be
Sorrow for men, or pride, or recompense.

I know these things, yet hold it little blame
To know them not, though in their proud array,
The flowers advance to make the world so gay.
Ah, what a change ! The things I know by name
Look unfamiliar all, and, like a flame,
The roses burn upon the hedge to-day.

The grass is velvet. There are pearls thereon,
And golden signs, and braid that doth appear
Made for a bridal. This is fairy gear
If I mistake not. I shall know anon.
Nature herself will teach me how to con
The new-found words to thank the glowing year.

This is the path that led me to the brook ;
And this the mead, and this the mossy slope,
And this the place where breezes did elope
With giddy moths, enamour'd of a look ;
And here I sat alone, or with a book,
Dreaming the dreams of constancy and hope.

I loved the river well ; but not till now
Did I perceive the marvels of the shore.
This is a cave, and this an emerald floor ;
And here Sir Eglantine might make a vow,
And here a king, a guilty king, might bow
Before a child, and break his word no more.

The day is dying. I shall see him die,
And I shall watch the sunset, and the red
Of all that splendour when the day is dead.
And I shall see the stars upon the sky,
And think them torches that are lit on high
To light the Lord Apollo to his bed.

And sweet To-morrow, like a golden bark,
Will call for me, and lead me on apace
To where I shall behold, in all her grace,
Mine own true Lady, whom a happy lark
Did late salute, appointing, after dark,
A nightingale to carol in his place.

Oh, come to me ! Oh, come, beloved day,
O sweet To-morrow ! Youngest of the sons
Of old King Time, to whom Creation runs
As men to God. Oh, quickly with thy ray
Anoint my head, and teach me how to pray,
As gentle Jesus taught the little ones.

I am aweary of the waiting hours,
I am aweary of the tardy night.
The hungry moments rob me of delight,
The crawling minutes steal away my powers ;
And I am sick at heart, as one who cowers,
In lonely haunts, remov'd from human sight.

How shall I think the night was meant for sleep,
When I must count the dreadful hours thereof,
And cannot beat them down, or bid them doff
Their hateful masks ? A man may wake and weep
From hour to hour, and, in the silence deep,
See shadows move, and almost hear them scoff.

Oh, come to me, To-morrow ! like a friend,
And not as one who bideth for the clock.
Be swift to come, and I will hear thee knock
And though the night refuse to make an end
Of her dull peace, I promptly will descend
And let thee in, and thank thee for the shock.

Dear, good To-morrow ! in my life, till now,
I did not think to need thee quite so soon.
I did not think that I should hate the moon,
Or new or old, or that my fevered brow
Requir'd the sun to cool it. I will bow
To this new day, that he may grant the boon.

Yes, 'twill consent. The day will dawn at last.
Day and the tide approach. They cannot rest.
They must approach. They must by every test
Of all men's knowledge, neither slow nor fast,
Approach and front us. When the night is past,
The morrow's dawn will lead me to my quest.

Then shall I tremble greatly, and be glad,
For I shall meet my true-love all alone,
And none shall tell me of her dainty zone,
And none shall say how sweetly she is clad ;
But I shall know it. Men may call me mad ;
But I shall know how bright the world has grown.

There is a grammar of the lips and eyes,
And I have learnt it. There are tokens sure
Of trust in love ; and I have found them pure.
Is love the guerdon then ? Is love the prize ?
It is ! It is ! We find it in the skies,
And here on earth 'tis all that will endure.

All things for love. All things in some divine
And wish'd for way, conspire, as Nature knows,
To some great good. Where'er a daisy grows
There grows a joy. The forest-trees combine
To talk of peace when mortals would repine ;
And he is false to God who flouts the rose.

II.--THE WAKING OF THE LARK.

O BONNIE bird, that in the brake, exultant, dost
prepare thee—

As poets do whose thoughts are true, for wings that
will upbear thee—

Oh ! tell me, tell me, bonnie bird,

Canst thou not pipe of hope deferred ?

Or canst thou sing of naught but Spring among the
golden meadows ?

Methinks a bard (and thou art one) should suit his
song to sorrow,

And tell of pain, as well as gain, that waits us on the
morrow ;

But thou art not a prophet, thou,

If naught but joy can touch thee now ;

If, in thy heart, thou hast no vow that speaks of
Nature's anguish.

Oh ! I have held my sorrows dear, and felt, tho' poor
and slighted,

The songs we love are those we hear when love is
unrequited.

But thou art still the slave of dawn,

And canst not sing till night be gone,

Till o'er the pathway of the fawn the sunbeams shine
and quiver.

Thou art the minion of the sun that rises in his
splendour,

And canst not spare for Dian fair the songs that
should attend her.

The moon, so sad and silver-pale,

Is mistress of the nightingale ;

And thou wilt sing on hill and dale no ditties in the
darkness.

For Queen and King thou wilt not spare one note of
thine outpouring ;

Thou'rt as free as breezes be on Nature's velvet
flooring.

The daisy, with its hood undone,

The grass, the sunlight, and the sun—

These are the joys, thou holy one, that pay thee for
thy singing.

Oh, hush ! Oh, hush ! how wild a gush of rapture in
the distance,—

A roll of rhymes, a toll of chimes, a cry for love's
assistance ;

A sound that wells from happy throats,

A flood of song where beauty floats,

And where our thoughts, like golden boats, do seem
to cross a river.

This is the advent of the lark—the priest in gray
apparel—

Who doth prepare to trill in air his sinless Summer
carol ;

This is the prelude to the lay

The birds did sing in Cæsar's day,

And will again, for aye and aye, in praise of God's
creation.

O dainty thing, on wonder's wing, by life and love
elated,

Oh ! sing aloud from cloud to cloud, till day be conse-
crated ;

Till from the gateways of the morn,

The sun, with all his light unshorn,

His robes of darkness round him torn, doth scale the
lofty heavens !

III.—MIRAGE.

'TIS a legend of a lover,
'Tis a ballad to be sung,
In the gloaming,—under cover,—
By a minstrel who is young ;
By a singer who has passion, and who sways us
with his tongue.

I, who know it, think upon it,
Not unhappy, tho' in tears,
And I gather in a sonnet
All the glory of the years ;
And I kiss and clasp a shadow when the substance
disappears.

Ah ! I see her as she faced me,
In the sinless summer days,
When her little hands embraced me,
And I saddened at her gaze,
Thinking, Sweet One ! will she love me when we
walk in other ways ?

Will she cling to me as kindly
When the childish faith is lost ?
Will she pray for me as blindly,
Or but weigh the wish and cost,
Looking back on our lost Eden from the girlhood
she has cross'd ?

Oh ! I swear by all I honour,
By the graves that I endow,
By the grace I set upon her,
That I meant the early vow,—
Meant it much as men and women mean the same
thing spoken now.

But her maiden troth is broken,
And her mind is ill at ease,
And she sends me back no token
From her home beyond the seas;
And I know, though nought is spoken, that she
thanks me on her knees.

Yes, for pardon freely granted;
For she wrong'd me, understand.
And my life is disenchanted,
As I wander through the land
With the sorrows of dark morrows that await me
in a band.

Hers was sweetest of sweet faces,
Hers the tenderest eyes of all!
In her hair she had the traces
Of a heavenly coronal,
Bringing sunshine to sad places where the sunlight
could not fall.

She was fairer than a vision;
Like a vision, too, has flown.
I, who flushed at her decision,
Lo! I languish here alone;
And I tremble when I tell you that my anger was
mine own.

Not for her, sweet sainted creature!
Could I curse her to her face?
Could I look on form and feature,
And deny the inner grace?
Like a little wax Madonna she was holy in the place

And I told her, in mad fashion,
That I loved her,—would incline
All my life to this one passion,

And would kneel as at a shrine ;
And would love her late and early, and would teach
her to be mine.

Now in dreams alone I meet her
With my lowly human praise :
She is sweeter and completer,
And she smiles on me always ;
But I dare not rise and greet her as I did in early days.

IV.—BEETHOVEN AT THE PIANO.

SEE where Beethoven sits alone—a dream of days
Elysian,
A crownless king upon a throne, reflected in a vision—
The man who strikes the potent chords which make
the world, in wonder,
Acknowledge him, though poor and dim, the mouth-
piece of the thunder.
He feels the music of the skies the while his heart is
breaking ;
He sings the songs of Paradise, where love has no
forsaking ;
And, though so deaf he cannot hear the tempest as
a token,
He makes the music of his mind the grandest ever
spoken.
He doth not hear the whispered word of love in his
seclusion,
Or voice of friend, or song of bird, in Nature's sad
confusion ;
But he hath made, for Love's sweet sake, so wild a
declamation
That all true lovers of the earth have claim'd him of
their nation,

He had a Juliet in his youth, as Romeo had before
him,
And, Romeo-like, he sought to die that she might
then adore him ;
But she was weak, as women are whose faith has
not been proven,
And would not change her name for his—Guiciardi
for Beethoven.

O minstrel, whom a maiden spurned, but whom a
world has treasured !
O sovereign of a grander realm than man has ever
measured !
Thou hast not lost the lips of love, but thou hast
gain'd, in glory,
The love of all who know the thrall of thine im-
mortal story.

Thou art the bard whom none discard, but whom
all men discover
To be a god, as Orpheus was, albeit a lonely lover ;
A king to call the stones to life beside the roaring
ocean,
And bid the stars discourse to trees in words of
man's emotion.

A king of joys, a prince of tears, an emperor of the
seasons,
Whose songs are like the sway of years in Love's
immortal reasons ;
A bard who knows no life but this : to love and be
rejected,
And reproduce in earthly strains the prayers of the
elected.

O poet heart ! O seraph soul ! by men and maids
adorèd !

O Titan with the lion's mane, and with the splendid
forehead !

We men who bow to thee in grief must tremble in
our gladness,

To know what tears were turned to pearls to crown
thee in thy sadness.

An Angel by direct descent, a German by alliance,
Thou didst intone the wonder-chords which made
Despair a science.

Yea, thou didst strike so grand a note that, in its
large vibration,

It seemed the roaring of the sea in nature's jubilation.

O Sire of Song ! Sonata-King ! Sublime and loving
master ;

The sweetest soul that ever struck an octave in
disaster ;

In thee were found the fires of thought—the
splendours of endeavour,—

And thou shalt sway the minds of men for ever and
for ever !

V.—MARY ARDEN.

O THOU to whom, athwart the perish'd days
And parted nights, long sped, we lift our gaze,
Behold ! I greet thee with a modern rhyme,
Love-lit and reverent as befits the time,
To solemnize the feast-day of thy son.

And who was he who flourish'd in the smiles
Of thy fair face ? 'Twas Shakespeare of the Isles,
Shakespeare of England, whom the world has known
As thine, and ours, and Glory's, in the zone
Of all the seas and all the lands of earth.

He was un-famous when he came to thee,
But sound, and sweet, and good for eyes to see,
And born at Stratford, on St. George's Day,
A week before the wondrous month of May;
And God therein was gracious to us all.

He lov'd thee, Lady ! and he lov'd the world ;
And, like a flag, his fealty was unfurl'd ;
And Kings who flourished ere thy son was born
Shall live through him, from morn to furthest morn,
In all the far-off cycles yet to come.

He gave us Falstaff, and a hundred quips,
A hundred mottoes from immortal lips ;
And, year by year, we smile to keep away
The generous tears that mind us of the sway
Of his great singing, and the pomp thereof.

His was the nectar of the gods of Greece,
The lute of Orpheus, and the Golden Fleece
Of grand endeavour ; and the thunder-roll
Of words majestic, which, from pole to pole,
Have borne the tidings of our English tongue.

He gave us Hamlet ; and he taught us more
Than schools have taught us ; and his fairy-lore
Was fraught with science ; and he called from death
Verona's Lovers, with the burning breath
Of their great passion that has filled the spheres.

He made us know Cordelia, and the man
Who murder'd sleep, and baleful Caliban ;
And, one by one, athwart the gloom appear'd
Maidens and men and myths who were revered
In olden days, before the earth was sad.

Aye ! this is true. It was ordainèd so ;
He was thine own, three hundred years ago ;
But ours to-day ; and ours till earth be red
With doom-day splendour for the quick and dead,
And days and nights be scattered like the leaves.

It was for this he lived, for this he died :
To raise to Heaven the face that never lied,
To lean to earth the lips that should become
Fraught with conviction when the mouth was dumb,
And all the firm, fine body turn'd to clay.

He lived to seal, and sanctify, the lives
Of perish'd maids, and uncreated wives,
And gave them each a space wherein to dwell ;
And for his mother's sake he loved them well,
And made them types, undying, of all truth

O fair and fond young mother of the boy
Who wrought all this—O Mary !—in thy joy
Didst thou perceive, when, fitful from his rest,
He turn'd to thee, that his would be the best
Of all men's chanting since the world began ?

Didst thou, O Mary ! with the eye of trust
Perceive, prophetic, through the dark and dust
Of things terrene, the glory of thy son,
And all the pride therein that should be won
By toilsome men, content to be his slaves ?

Didst thou, good mother ! in the tender ways
That women find to fill the fleeting days,
Behold afar the Giant who should rise
With foot on earth, and forehead in the skies,
To write his name, and thine, among the stars ?

I love to think it ; and, in dreams at night
I see thee stand, erect, and all in white,
With hands out-yearning to that mighty form,
As if to draw him back from out the storm,—
A child again, and thine to nurse withal.

I see thee, pale and pure, with flowing hair,
And big, bright eyes, far-searching in the air
For thy sweet babe, and, in a trice of time,
I see the boy advance to thee, and climb,
And call thee "Mother !" in ecstatic tones.

Yet, if my thought be vain—if, by a touch
Of this weak hand, I vex thee overmuch—
Forbear the blame, sweet Spirit ! and endow
My heart with fervour while to thee I bow
Athwart the threshold of my fading dream.

For, though so seeming-bold in this my song,
I turn to thee with reverence, in the throng
Of words and thoughts, as shepherds scann'd, afar,
The famed effulgence of that eastern star
Which usher'd in the Crown'd One of the heavens.

In dreams of rapture I have seen thee pass
Along the banks of Avon, by the grass,
As fair as that fair Juliet whom thy son
Endow'd with life, but with the look of one
Who knows the nearest way to some new grave.

And often, too, I've seen thee in the flush
Of thy full beauty, while the mother's "Hush !"
Hung on thy lip, and all thy tangled hair
Re-clothed a bosom that in part was bare
Because a tiny hand had toy'd therewith !

Oh ! by the June-tide splendour of thy face
When, eight weeks old, the child in thine embrace
Did leap and laugh, O Mary ! by the same,
I bow to thee, subservient to thy fame,
And call thee England's Pride for evermore !

VI.—A BALLAD OF KISSES.

THERE are three kisses that I call to mind,
And I will sing their secrets as I go.
The first, a kiss too courteous to be kind,
Was such a kiss as monks and maidens know ;
As sharp as frost, as blameless as the snow.

The second kiss, ah God ! I feel it yet,
And evermore my soul will loathe the same.
The toys and joys of fate I may forget,
But not the touch of that divided shame :
It clove my lips ; it burnt me like a flame.

The third, the final kiss, is one I use
Morning and noon and night ; and not amiss.
Sorrow be mine if such I do refuse !
And when I die, be love, enrapt in bliss,
Re-sanctified in Heaven by such a kiss.

VII.—THE LITTLE GRAVE.

ALITTLE mound of earth .
Is all the land I own :
Death gave it me,—five feet by three,
And marked it with a stone.
My home, my garden-grave,
Where most I long to go !
The ground is mine by right divine,
And Heaven will have it so.
For here my darling sleeps,
Unseen,—arrayed in white,—

And o'er the grass the breezes pass,
And stars look down at night.

Here Beauty, Love, and Joy,
With her in silence dwell,
As Eastern slaves are thrown in graves
Of kings remember'd well.

But here let no man come,
My mourning rights to sever.
Who lieth here is cold and dumb.
Her dust is mine for ever !

VIII.—A DIRGE.

ART thou lonely in thy tomb ?
Art thou cold in such a gloom ?
Rouse thee, then, and make me room,—
Miserere Domine !

Phantoms vex thy virgin sleep,
Nameless things around thee creep,
Yet be patient, do not weep,—
Miserere Domine !

O be faithful ! O be brave !
Naught shall harm thee in thy grave ;
Let the restless spirits rave,—
Miserere Domine !

When my pilgrimage is done,
When the grace of God is won,
I will come to thee, my nun,—
Miserere Domine !

Like a priest in flowing vest,
Like a pale, unbidden guest,
I will come to thee and rest,—
Miserere Domine !

Herbert E. Clarke.

1852.

HERBERT EDWIN CLARKE was born at Chatteris, in the Isle of Ely and county of Cambridge, on November 21st, 1852. His parents were members of the Society of Friends, sometimes called "Quakers," and he was educated at the denominational schools of that society. He has published two volumes of verse—"Songs of Exile" (1879), "Storm-Drift" (1882)—neither of which can be said to show any strong traces of his birth and education.

Mr. Clarke's poetry is apparently the outcome of an ardent spirit as affected by the beauties of nature and the disappointments of life. In the fields and among the flowers, when the spring buds and the sun shines, there is a joyous abandon in his response to natural influences, which shows him kin with the object of his worship. "Under the roof of blue Ionian weather," he sings as the birds sing, for the same reason that they sing: they are in their natural element; he is in his:—

"There is a sound of church-bells borne from far,
The beauteous land is wrapt in Sabbath calm;
More musical and sweet the flower-bells are,
And the birds' songs than any human psalm.
O hills, O woods, O sunlight, O pure sky,
Ye are the temple of our God most high.
Why soar these spires toward any outer star
While our fair earth lies folded in His arm,
Who saith to me—'Come forth, for here am I'?"

When he turns to the contemplation of life the key changes. The poet is saddened by the realisation of "what man has made of man," and his feelings find expression in vigorous rebel-songs alike against kings and creeds. In the poem "Thanksgiving," addressed to "Souls of poets dead and gone," he sings his gratitude to the singers of old time for the solace of their song amid failure and disappointment. Here he writes:—

"Love hath fled from me like a thing affrighted,
Of all that men desire my life hath failed ;
By fame unvisited—by faith unlighted,
By storms of passion and of doubt assailed."

If this is a real experience, it may be taken as a key to much that Mr. Clarke has written.

After this we are not surprised to come across such poems as "A Cry" (p. 469), and we expect the pessimistic strain that runs through others of Mr. Clarke's poems. In some of these, however, he has not made it clear whether he is speaking in his own person or attempting the dramatic presentation of the thoughts and feelings of others ; hence he lays himself open to the suspicion of insincerity. There is of course no necessary contradiction between these two extremes of Mr. Clarke's verse ; accepting them as sincere, they may be taken as representing the varying moods of the same ardent spirit beating against the bars of its own limitations, whether of height or depth. That Mr. Clarke can strike a true and healthy note is shown by such sonnets as those on "Life and Death" (p. 471). This is much more the tone for the times, and Mr. Clarke has all the necessary qualifications for sounding it with beauty and power.

ALFRED H. MILES.

SONGS OF EXILE.

1879.

HERBERT E. CLARKE.

I.—A SPRING CHORUS.

AFTER her long sleep, by thy sweet kiss broken,
Nature does now arise,
A crown of gold upon her brows for token,
And sunlight in her eyes.
And on her lips a smile for thee
That wakes an answering smile on land and sea.

In the glad meadows violets are springing,
Tossed and half drowned in blithe and blowing
grass,
That laughs to feel thy feet, and birds are singing
A joyful welcome as they hear thee pass,
And the wind woos thee and caresses,
And smells thereafter of thy odorous tresses.

And at thy advent the great sea rejoices ;
The thunder of his welcome shakes the shore ;
And everywhere the rivers lift their voices,
Made free once more.
Even men's sad hearts within their bosoms sing
To greet thee, Spring.

Take us with thee, O glad and winsome maiden,
And let us go,—
Our hearts are weary now and heavy laden
With worldly woe,—
Now from life's dusty battle let us flee
Away with thee.

Thou hast somewhere a cool and shady dwelling.
Where ferns uncurl and darker ivies climb ;
From fairy fountains, water ever welling
Fills all the air with liquid-rippling rhyme.
The bright light crocus and the snowdrop timid,
Bold daisies gazing ever on the sky,
And golden cups with dewy nectar brimmed,
About thy palace floor in myriads lie.
With new-waked life the busy air is teeming,
Flits the gay butterfly and hums the bee ;
In fitful sunlight the moist rocks are gleaming,
There comes a murmur of the distant sea.
Delicate tapestry the walls doth cover,
Of gossamer the fairies weave at morn :
Here thou dost woo the youthful year, thy lover,—
Here the flower-goddess does thy brows adorn.
And here thy nymphs upon soft moss are lying.
Shadow and sunshine o'er their bright limbs cast,
As up above the snow-white clouds go flying
Before a wanton wind that follows fast.
From out the murky midmost of the city,
Where scarce thy face is seen, we cry to thee,
O flower-crowned maiden-goddess, of thy pity
To set us free.

Lo last year's hopes, like last year's fruits are rotten,
Or past away,—
And last year's loves and leaves alike forgotten,
And last year's May ;—
New hopes are born, new leaves, new loves are
springing,
May comes again,
And with the birds at sight of her are singing
The hearts of men.

Flash out, O Sun, in splendour.
Roll on, O tide of Spring,
Whereon, like foam, the tender
White May is blossoming ;

Thy goddess on thy bosom
Is wafted to the strand ;
With bird and bud and blossom
Fill all the laughing land.

The woodland ways and alleys
Thy coming decked to greet,
And all the hills and valleys
On fire before thy feet.

Dryads and fauns go reeling
The joyous ways along,
With cymbal clash and pealing
Of laughter and of song.

Silenus shakes with laughter,
And Bacchus young and fair,
By panthers drawn, comes after,
With ivy crowned hair.

Near the wild train we hover
But silent for a space,
Until our eyes discover
Thy glorious form and face ;—

Then the leaf-arches under,
While flowers fall thick as spray,
As swells the song in thunder,
We follow thee away.

II.—ON THE EMBANKMENT.

UNDER the mist and the moonlight I wander
alone along
Between the hum of the city and the river's soothing
song,

And the wind that blows from the water is keen
like a sword, and strong.

I love to roam by the river in the grey of the winter
nights,
Till I seem to be nought but a shadow among the
shadowy sights,
Above, and below, and around me a dazzling tangle
of lights—

Lights that glow in the water, lights that burn in
the sky,
Lights that twinkle and change, lights that flicker
and fly;
And the great moon over them all, ruling supreme on
high.

Clothed by the shining mist with a wedding-gar-
ment of white;
And the tide of the Thames to left, and the city's
tide to right,
Run swiftly out in the dimness, filling the ear of
the night

With a musical, mingling murmur, that wakes in
my dreaming brain
Thoughts that are sad for pleasure, and yet too
soothing for pain,
And steals 'twixt the thoughts awakened like a far-
off song's refrain.

There is passion, and pain, and sorrow, there is
hope, and rest, and ease,
And Labour, with Love for guerdon, in the mingling
melodics,
And my vague unrest is quiet, and I am content and
at peace.
O toiling brothers and sisters,—O moon, O stars,
O night,—
O rapid and restless river,—O mist of the midnight
white,—
O colour, and sound, and silence—O darkness, and
O light,—
I am glad of you, one with you, part of you—an
atom of all am I,—
One with the mist and the river, and the courtesan
strolling by,
And one with the great white moon in the solemn
and splendid sky.
A glimpse of the dream's fulfilment, or ever the
dream is done ?
That the little imperfect lives, we may-flies live in
the sun
Shall be gathered at last together and woven for ever
in one !
One that is all-sufficing, where nothing of self can be,
And the strifes and struggles are ended, unravelled
the mystery ;
Yes, all is so very plain that we do not need to see.
Nought that is clean or unclean, nought that is low
or high,
Nought that is evil or good, and nought that can
change or die,—
Nought that is other than me, yet nought any more
that is I.

III.—IN THE WOOD.

THROUGH laughing leaves the sunlight comes,
Turning the green to gold ;
The bee about the heather hums,
And the morning air is cold
Here on the breezy woodland side,
Where we two ride.

Through laughing leaves on golden hair
The sunlight glances down,
And makes a halo round her there,
And crowns her with a crown
Queen of the sunrise and the sun,
As we ride on.

The wanton wind has kissed her face,—
His lips have left a rose,—
He found her cheek so sweet a place
For kisses, I suppose,—
He thought he'd leave a sign, that so
Others might know.

The path grows narrower as we ride
The green boughs close above,
And overhead, and either side,
The wild birds sing of Love :—
But ah, she is not listening
To what they sing !

Till I take up the wild bird's song
And word by word unfold
Its meaning as we ride along,—
And when my tale is told,
I turn my eyes to hers again,—
And then,—and then,—

(The bridle path more narrow grows,
 The leaves shut out the sun ;—)
 Where the wind's lips left their one rose
 My own leave more than one :—
 While the leaves murmur up above,
 And laugh for love.

This was the place ;—you see the sky
 Now 'twixt the branches bare ;
 About the path the dead leaves lie,
 And songless in the air ;—
 All's changed since then, for that you know
 Was long ago.—

Let us ride on ! The wind is cold.—
 Let us ride on—ride fast !—
 'Tis winter, and we know of old
 That love could never last
 Without the summer and the sun !—
 Let us ride on !

IV.—ON THE PIER.

A CRASH of music, a blaze of light,
 Where the dancers whirl in glee ;—
 And out beyond the silent night
 Over the sighing sea,
 Whose waves sigh on, sigh on, sigh on,
 Whose waves sigh on for ever.
 So with its music, and mirth, and song,
 Its glory of laughter and love,
 To a madding measure Life whirls along,
 But Death is around and above :
 And still thro' the music we hear the rhyme,
 The sorrowful song of the tide of Time,
 Whose waves sigh on, sigh on, sigh on,
 Whose waves sigh on for ever.

V.—AGE.

ALL the strong spells of Passion slowly breaking,
Its chains undone ;
A troubled sleep that dreams to peaceful waking.
A haven won.

A fire burnt out unto the last dead ember,
Left black and cold ;
A fiery August unto still September
Yielding her gold.

A dawn serene the windy midnight over,
The darkness past ;
Now, with no clouds nor mists her face to cover,
The day at last.

Thou hast thy prayed-for peace, O soul, and quiet
From storm and strife ;—
Now yearn for ever for the noise and riot
That made thy Life.

STORM-DRIFT.

1882.

HERBERT E. CLARKE.

I.—A NOCTURN AT TWILIGHT.

THE broken lights flow in—
The broken lights flow in—
And the notes flow out, flow out;
Life with its sorrow and sin;
Death with its endless doubt;
And the same old weary din
Goes on in the street without.

But the soul of the twilight sings—
The soul of the twilight sings—
And I hear the din no more
But a sound as of laughing springs;
A murmur of waves on the shore,
And upward on rhythmic wings
Doth the mounting melody soar.

The rippling notes arise—
The rippling notes arise—
Meseems somewhere afar
In depths of sunset skies
Shines many a silver star
O'er a sea that moans and sighs
To be where the pale stars are.

But the mounting melody fails—
The mounting melody fails—
Or ever the goal is won;
The starshine sickens and pales
Over the sunken sun;
The twilight alone prevails,
But the twilight's soul is gone.

And the broken lights flow in—
 The broken lights flow in—
 And the white hands leave the keys ;
 So, e'er they well begin,
 End all life's melodies ;
 And again arises the din
 Outside that shall never cease.

II.—A VOLUNTARY.

AH, what a glorious land is this to-day,
 Full of glad sunshine—wonderful with flowers.
 Rise, my beloved, rise and come away,—
 Whom should we envy while these gifts are ours ?
 The gold that summer heaps upon the lea,
 The Danæ-showers of the laburnum tree,
 The purple hills' imperial array,
 The woods' leaf-turrets, terraces, and towers ?
 Oh come, my love, my fair one, come with me !

There is a sound of church-bells borne from far.
 The beauteous land is wrapt in Sabbath calm ;
 More musical and sweet the flower-bells are,
 And the birds' songs than any human psalm.
 O hills, O woods, O sunlight, O pure sky,
 Ye are the temple of our God most high.

Why soar these spires toward any outer star
 While our fair earth lies folded in His arm,
 Who saith to me—“ *Come forth, for here am I* ” ?

Let us go forth unto Him, O my sweet,
 Through this our Eden as in days of old
 Two mortals by Him trod with fearless feet,
 And communed with Him and were blithe and bold.

No church-wall then, or priest to come between —
 Let us go forth—He shall again be seen,
 And from the silence of the hills shall greet ;
 And in His glorious garment us enfold.
 Yea, to the holiest place shall lead us in.

* * * * *

O Day, for ever to be marked with white,
 O perfect "bridal of the earth and sky,"
 For thy most bounteous guerdon of delight
 I thought to praise thee e'er thou cam'st to die ;
 But lo, unto thee every thing doth raise
 One mighty pean of exulting praise :
 Man, trees, flowers—all ; yea, even sable Night
 Takes thee to her dark bosom tenderly,
 And scarce will let thee go, thou Day of Days.

III.—FAILURE.

LET my head lie quiet here upon your shoulder
 Once, once more ;
 Dead desires are round us, round us dead hopes
 moulder—

All is o'er.

We were young and strong, dear, stout and hopeful-
 hearted—

Who could know
 What dark future lay before us when we started
 Long ago ?

When we two joined hands, dear, in our life's bright
 morning,

Heard the call,
 Gladly rushed to join the strife, supineness scorning ;
 Over all

Saw Hope's sunrise gleaming glorious and golden,
Knew no fear

Though beside us Failure marching un beholden,
Was so near.

Now we know the secret—fight by failure ended,
Final fall ;

Nothing good or great, dear, nothing grand or splendid
In at all.

Youth's bright morning passes, and for all its blossom,
Fruit is none ;

Now my head lies quiet on your soft white bosom,
All is done.

And the haze is thickening round us, making
dimmer

The bare room,
Lighted only by the charcoal's lurid glimmer
In the gloom.

To that brazier's glimmer hath the glory dwindled,
Fallen far,

Lo, the light whereat our hearts' high hope was
kindled :

Lo, our star.

God-sent star we deemed it, sent to cheer and
speed us,

Guide and save,
When 'twas but a pale corpse-candle, lit to lead us
To the grave.

Some will blame Fate's harshness, some our own
demerit—

Shall we know ?

Shall we feel it, shall we care for it, or hear it,
Where we go ?

Some will mock as crazed, and some will curse as
craven ;

Let them lie.

Shall they mar the perfect quiet of our heaven
With their cry ?

Though it rent high heaven, though the earth were
shaken

And the deep—

Lo, not all the tumult there should ever waken
One from sleep.

Need we say farewell, dear—we who go together,
Hand in hand,

Through the night and darkness and the winter
weather,

To Death's land ?

Nay, but cheek by cheek, love, as in nights past
over,

Breast to breast

We too gladly enter, lover clasping lover,
Into rest.

IV.—A CRY.

LO! I am weary of all,
Of men and their love and their hate ;
I have been long enough Life's thrall
And the toy of a tyrant Fate.

I would have nothing but rest ;

I would not struggle again ;

Take me now to thy breast,

Earth, sweet mother of men.

Hide me and let me sleep,
Give me a lonely tomb
So close and so dark and so deep—
I shall hear no trumpet of doom.

There let me lie forgot
When the dead at its blast are gone
Give me to hear it not,
But only to slumber on.

This is the fate I crave,
For I look to the end and see
If there be not rest in the grave
There will never be rest for me.

SONNETS.

HERBERT E. CLARKE.

LIFE AND DEATH.

I.

HOLD not thy life too dear because of death ;
Why wilt thou nought but labour all thy days ?
Thou winnest, but shalt never wear the bays,
Thou sowest and another gathereth
The fruitage. Live thou then as one who saith :
I wait a summons, and with prayer and praise
And helpful kindness fills the time he stays,
And unregretfully yields up his breath.
Wilt thou pull down thy barns and greater build
Because thy life's land laughs one golden sea,
From East to West, from North to South fulfilled
With promise of harvest ? Nay, for verily
Dreaming thy dreams thou findest stricken and chilled
Thou fool even now thy soul required of thee.

II.

Because of Death hold not thy life too cheap ;
Plan for the years—found broad and strong—
aim high :
Nobly to fail is more than victory
Over unworthy foes : mourn not nor weep,
One span of life thou hast 'twixt deep and deep.
Be all thy care to fill it gloriously :
Live even as if thou knew'st thou couldst not die
This day is short—there will be years for sleep.
Therefore work thou while it is called to-day,
And let the night of the night's things take care.
By those strong souls who have our earth more fair
With their strenuous service unto all for aye
I charge thee work, and let not Death dismay
Nor the shadow of death, but greatly hope and dare.

III.—A CHORD.

LAST night I chanced upon a nursery rhyme,
An ancient jingle, out of fashion long,
A poor patched verse, a sorry little song,
That stirred my spirit like a fairy chime,
With dreams and memories of olden time,
And voices sweet of many a tuneful tongue
That soothed my childhood,—silent now among
The silent shadows of that sunless clime

Where all sleep well unsung to. Once again
I heard the voices I shall hear no more,
And saw the kindly faces that are gone
Forever now out of the whole world's ken :—
One tiny waif cast up on Memory's shore ;—
This shrine of sand I raise, and so fare on.

IV.—THE PAST DETHRONED.

MY reign is done. The old fresh springs are fled,
The amorous summers are burned out and cold,
Scattered and spent is autumn's ruddy gold,
And light the earth lies on fierce winter's head ;
The Past, or good or ill, is done and dead,
And shall not rise : bury the corpse : behold
The Future beckons beautiful and bold,—
Bury the corpse and let no tears be shed.

'Tis in my heart as in some tyrant's court
Where men have trembled 'neath the pale king's frown
Hour after hour in silence, till kneels one
To sue for mercy at his feet,—stops short,—
Cries "*He is dead !*" and hurls him headlong down,
And the air rings with joy. My reign is done.

William James Dawson.

1854.

REV. W. J. DAWSON was born at Towcester, Northamptonshire, on November 21st, 1854. He was educated at Kingswood School, Bath, and Didsbury College, Manchester, whence he passed into the Wesleyan ministry in 1875, residing for various periods in London, Glasgow and Southport. While stationed in Glasgow, on the occasion of the centenary celebration of the death of John Wesley, he was chosen to preach in St. Giles' Cathedral, Edinburgh, before the corporation of the city, and representatives of the University, and of all the theological halls and churches. As a lecturer, mostly on historic subjects, he has been very successful. In 1892 he resigned his position in the Wesleyan ministry, and became pastor of the Highbury Quadrant Congregational Church, London.

Mr. Dawson's first published work was "Arvelon, a First Poem" (1878), which was followed in 1884 by a "Vision of Souls, with other Ballads and Poems," from which the poems in this volume are taken. In 1886 was published "Quest and Vision, Essays in Life and Literature," which was reprinted with large additions in 1892. His other works include "The Threshold of Manhood," a book for young men (1889), "The Makers of Modern English, a popular Guide-book to the Greater Poets

of the Century," which has passed into several editions (1890), "The Redemption of Edward Strahan, a Social Story" (1891), and "The Church of To-morrow," a volume of sermon-essays (1892). Mr. Dawson's volume "A Vision of Souls" attracted some attention on its appearance, and, though it did not escape criticism, hopes were expressed that more work would follow from the same pen. The *Academy* referred to it as "a book of remarkable quality," "dramatic, unmistakably human, and full of thought"; and Mr. Stedman, in his "Victorian Poets," while debiting him with Rossettian influence, credited him with resources of "fancy rhythm and decoration," and prophesied that if the poet could but "outgrow his pupilage" something of worth might be expected from him. Admitting the Rossettian influence, it may yet be said that Mr. Dawson's work displays qualities not always found in that of his master. There is an unmistakable sincerity underlying all Mr. Dawson's verse, and a high seriousness in his aim which gives a warmth and glow to much of his work. There is more of blood in it if there is less of art. Mr. Dawson has an eye for colour and powers of description which he employs with remarkable effect. Of these qualities the series of short poems (p. 475), including "Deliverance," which has been characterised as "remarkable in imagination and force of phrase," bears witness. His references to children and to child life are full of tender feeling and natural pathos.

ALFRED H. MILES.

A VISION OF SOULS, AND OTHER POEMS.

1884.

WILLIAM JAMES DAWSON.

I.—THE COMING OF THE SOUL.

IN God's hands lie the souls of men,
At God's feet spreads the infinite,
Filled with its wheeling worlds, as when
He made the earth and made the light.
And like a dove of white each soul
Flies forth across the abysmal sea,
Where golden suns and systems roll,
To find the life that is to be.

The myriad millions of the just,
The seraphim, in fiery rings
Bow down, and every world of dust
Is brightened with the flash of wings.
And when each soul flies forth from them
Through deeps of gloom, and seas of light,
A music, as of Bethlehem,
Flows forth, and floods the hollow night.

The crystal gates of light unbar,
A holy silence fills the sky :
New waves of splendour from each star
Break at the feet of God and die.
And far in some dark world of His,
Half-circled in its light and gloom,
A mother shares God's awful bliss :
Her child has quickened in the womb

And evermore before God's face,
Like snow within a driving wind,
There move the souls white-clothed in grace,
Whose earthly pain is left behind.
And evermore from God's right hand
New souls fly forth, like sparks of light
From clear white fires by whirlwinds fanned,
And fall into the outer night.

And through the roar of winds and earths
Forever circling round His throne,
And through ten thousand splendid births
Of day and night, zone after zone ;
Through wastes of light and dread abyss,
There floats the new-born infant's cry,
And thus the furthest world of His
Makes gladder yet the inmost sky.

And angels bearing frankincense
Of holy thoughts, and myrrh of pain,
And kingly gifts, prefiguring whence
The soul arose, fly forth ; and twain
Stand at the lowly mother's head,
And twain about her feet, that they
From silent censers twain may shed
A sunlight gathered from God's day.

In God's hands lie the souls of men,
Like doves that crowd within a nest ;
At God's knees throng in order then
The myriad millions of the blest ;
And all the world in rings of light
Burn on their way about His feet ;
And He creates as seems Him right,
And calls to death, when death is meet.

II.—FLOWER FACES.

THERE be fair violet lives that bloom unseen
In dewy shade, unvexed by any care ;
And they who live them wear the flower-like face
Of simple pureness, which amid the crowd
Of haggard brows strikes like a sweet perfume
Upon the jaded sense. God covers them,
Maybe, beneath the shadow of His wing,
That they may sweeten all His dark for Him,
And from their secret place waft airs of calm
Upon His troubled worlds. Sometimes they are
The holy sisters, who with wakeful eyes
Watch by the sick in dreary hospitals
Close to the battlefield. Sometimes I see
The face gleam out beneath a Quaker hood,
More lily-like than violet, silver haired
With exquisite eyes of silent blessedness ;
And sometimes they be wives whose wedded love
Is fortunate, who always hear the mirth
Of children's voices like a babbling brook
Follow them through the dusty ways of life.
And sometimes 'tis a fair young rustic face,
Peach-shaded with the purity of health ;
And she, the Mother of the Christ, looked thus,
But sadder, with the holy stain of tears
Upon her bloom, like rain on bursting buds.
But whensoever I see the liquid eyes
And smiling innocence, I think of flowers
That grow upon a mossy bank in spring,
When larks are singing in the windy skies,
And all my spirit rises up in praise
Because God's world holds in its wrecked design,
His image still, who made it very good.

III.—THE FIRST-BORN.

THE bitterest and the gladdest hour it was!
I stood at the stair's foot and heard your cry
Ring through the house. Upon the slanting glass
The setting sun made splendour, and I watched
Him sink with eyes which nothing saw. Again,
A moment's space the chamber-door unlatched
Let out your moaning, and I bitterly
Bowed down and trembled at your voice of pain.
Eternity seemed crowded in that hour;
All thought and passion, faculty and power
Was quickened and intense; the veil of gross
And faulty apprehension was withdrawn,
And left the naked heaven of infinite things
Close to me, like a throbbing heart. More close
I felt thy spirit, and I cried, "What now
If she be passing out on angel's wings?"
Just then the sun sank to his other dawn,
And as his rim burned down in final glow,
I heard a new voice in the house, the cry
Of the new-born, whose kindling human light
Rose on our lives, and, please God, by-and-by
Shall shine far out athwart the world's dark night.

IV.—DELIVERANCE.

IN that sore hour around thy bed there stood
A silent guard of shadows, each equipped
With dart or arrow aimed against thy life.
Thy breath came slowly all that awful night;
Outside I heard the wind and earth at strife,
And on the window's ledge incessant dripped
The pitiless rain. At last I left thy room,
And passing out, upon its threshold's edge

Who should I meet but Death ! A wan clear light
Fell from his fathomless eyes, his brow was gloom,
His rustling raiment seemed to sigh like sedge
When the salt marsh-winds wail and beat thercon.
He paused, he turned ; and while I stood and wept,
Behold a crimson signal waved and shone
On the door's lintel, even such an one
As he obeyed in Egypt, and I knew
Death heard some higher summons, and withdrew :
When I returned, like a tired child you slept.

V.—THE SLEEPING MOTHER.

HOW still the vast depths of this City's heart !
At last the ever-moaning tide of life
Is quiet, and, sweet mother, wearied thou
With the babe's wailing and its piteous strife,
Thou too, worn in love's toil, art tranquil now.
I watch thee, and I think how fair thou art
In this deep-lidded sleep ; the uncoiled hair
Piled round the high clear brow, one white arm bare,
On which lies warm the little golden head
Wearier even than thine. And now I see
How sunk thine eyes are, and that forehead fair,
How fretted with faint lines unmerited
So early ; and reproach lays hold of me,
That I have led thee from thy pastures green
To these steep slopes where we are bowed with care.
Yet if thou should'st awake and read my thought,
I know thine eyes would fill with light serene,
And thou would'st say, " This burden have I sought,
This service is a perfect liberty ;
This City of Love, whose pulse of love beats quick
With strenuous tasks, is it not better far

Than virgin pastures, where the air is thick
With golden languors and a dull content ?”
Great joy hath woman when that time is spent,
And on her life there rises that new star
Which leads her feet where mother-raptures are.

VI.—THE LAST DAY.

THEN at the last, from her drawn dying lips
I saw her soul pass forth, as one might see
A bright flame quiver : then the great eclipse
Slow-settled on her brow, and all was dark.
So bound was I with my sore agony,
That all my brain seemed numb, until a spark
Of new strange light, dropped from her soul's keen flame,
This trance or vision kindled in my mind.
I saw her Soul, far off and like a star,
Move in the dark deep heavens, and lo ! a wind
Blew bitterly, and sudden I became
A frail ghost caught within its upward whirl,
Until my feet trod heaven's outer bar.
Then once I turned, and saw this world lie far
Within her folded clouds, and once I turned
And saw the opening gates of God which burned
With clear deep light, as they were made of pearl.
And then I cried aloud, and lo ! her soul
Drew near me on the wind a moment's space,
And smiled and vanished ! And with that the whole
Dream like some shining bubble shook and broke :
With sound of my own weeping I awoke,
And lo ! I wept upon her poor dead face.

VII.—A CHILD'S PORTRAIT.

HER face is hushed in perfect calm,
Her lips half-open hint the psalm
The angels sing, who wear God's palm :
And in her eyes a liquid light,
With somewhat of a starry sheen,
Comes welling upward from the white
And vestal soul that throbs within.

A golden tangle is her hair
That holds the sunlight in its snare ;
And one pure lily she doth wear
In her white robe : and she doth seem
A flower-like creature, who will fade
If suns strike down too rude a beam,
Or winds blow roughly on her shade.

The golden ladders of the Dawn
Meet at her feet, where on the lawn
She stands, in tender thought withdrawn :
And little wonder would it be,
If on those slanting stairs she trod,
And with one farewell smile toward me,
Were caught into the smile of God.

VIII.—TO A LITTLE CHILD.

DEAR child, with eyes of heaven's stain
And face like fair flowers blowing,
It fills me with a sense of pain
To see how fast thou'rt growing.
But yesterday heaven's crystal door
Unclosed, and we received thee ;
To-morrow thou wilt find how poor
The world that has deceived thee.

Already with such serious eyes
Thou look'st between thy kisses,
I feel that thou art growing wise,
Too wise for childhood's blisses.

I think of Jesus full of glee
Within the sunlit meadows,
And Mary with sad eyes that see
Far off the Cross's shadows.

And I could almost bow and pray,
"O Lord, if this Thy will is,
Let this sweet child forever play
Amid sweet Nazareth's lilies!"

That thou must leave this happy plain
To life's steep Calvary going,
It fills me with a sense of pain
To see how fast thou'rt growing.

Edward Cracroft Lefroy.

1855—1891.

REV. EDWARD CRACROFT LEFROY, whose "Echoes from Theocritus and other Sonnets" won for him recognition in critical circles as a virile and accomplished cultivator of "the sonnet's scanty plot of ground," was born in Westminster in 1855. His family connections on either side ally him with distinguished people; on his father's with Jane Austen the novelist, and on his mother's with Sir John Franklin, and the two sisters, who became the wives of Charles and Alfred Tennyson. He was educated at Blackheath and Keble College, Oxford, where he graduated in 1877. Taking holy orders he held curacies successively at Lambeth, Truro and other places until 1882, when he relinquished clerical for educational work. After many months of delicate health he died September 20th, 1891.

Mr. Lefroy's sonnets were first issued locally, at Blackheath, in pamphlet form, and subsequently collected to the number of a hundred and published in London under the title, "Echoes of Theocritus and other Sonnets" (1885). This volume received a hearty welcome from a few discerning critics, and has been duly represented in the various sonnet anthologies which have appeared since. Mr. William Sharp claimed for Mr. Lefroy's sonnet work affinity with that of Hartley Coleridge and Charles Tennyson Turner,

and named him as their lineal successor. There is, however, a robustness about some of Mr. Lefroy's work which is hardly so characteristic of theirs, and a refinement in some of their work not always aimed at by Mr. Lefroy. A sympathetic and discriminating study of these sonnets from the pen of the late Mr. John Addington Symonds will be found in his volume of essays, "In the Key of Blue." Of the sonnets upon classical themes the following may be taken as an example:—

A THOUGHT FROM PINDAR.

(NEM. V.)

"Twin immortalities man's art doth give
To man ; both fair ; both noble ; one supreme.
The sculptor beating out his portrait scheme
Can make the marble statue breathe and live ;
Yet with a life cold, silent, locative ;
It cannot break its stone-eternal dream,
Or step to join the busy human stream,
But dwells in some high fane a hieroglyph.
Not so the poet. Hero, if thy name
Lives in his verse, it lives indeed. For then
In every ship thou sailest passenger
To every town where aught of soul doth stir,
Through street and market borne, at camp and game,
And on the lips and in the hearts of men !"

The healthy hearty ring of many of Mr. Lefroy's sonnets upon modern subjects commends them at once to healthy minds, while his genial sympathy with even noisy childhood and boisterous youth give some of them good claims to perennial popularity. Selection is difficult ; one would like to include so many, and has room for so few, and every sonnet lover should be in possession of the whole.

ALFRED H. MILES.

SONNETS.

EDWARD CRACROFT LEFROY.

I.—ON THE BEACH IN NOVEMBER.

MY heart's Ideal, that somewhere out of sight
Art beautiful and gracious and alone,—
Haply where blue Saronic waves are blown
On shores that keep some touch of old delight,—
How welcome is thy memory, and how bright,
To one who watches over leagues of stone
These chilly northern waters creep and moan
From weary morning unto weary night.

O Shade-form, lovelier than the living crowd,
So kind to votaries, yet thyself invowed,
So free to human fancies, fancy-free,
My vagrant thought goes out to thee, to thee,
As wandering lonelier than the Poet's cloud,
I listen to the wash of this dull sea.

II.—IN FEBRUARY.

AT last! Through murk that seemed too thick for rending,
The sun has burst with full unclouded ray;
And hark, how soon the little birds are sending
Glad canticles from naked bush and spray.
Yet timidly; from time to time suspending
Their song, as if they feared to be so gay,
When every hour may bring the sunlight's ending
And all the gold relapse again to grey.
Pipe on, small songsters! You and I together
Will catch the passing glory while we may.
No Fate forbids to preen a drooping feather,
Give voice to hope, and try a broken lay.
What if the morrow break in wintry weather—
Is it not something that we sing to-day?

III.—TWO THOUGHTS.

WHEN I reflect how small a space I fill
In this great teeming world of labourers,
How little I can do with strongest will,
How marred that little by most hateful blurs,—
The fancy overwhelms me, and deters
My soul from putting forth so poor a skill :
Let me be counted with those worshippers
Who lie before God's altar, and are still.
But then I think (for healthier moments come)
This power of will, this natural force of hand,—
What do they mean, if working be not wise ?
Forbear to weigh thy work, O soul ! Arise
And join thee to that nobler sturdier band
Whose worship is not idle, fruitless, dumb.

IV.—ON READING A POETS "LIFE."

BECAUSE he sang of pleasant paths and roses,
You thought that summer joys were all his care.
"The only wisdom," so you cried, "he knows is
How much delight one crowded day can bear :
The reason why his verse uniquely flows is
That he alone has wealth of bliss to spare :
In Tempe's vale for life he gathered posies,
And flings the few he doth not keep to wear."
The veil is lifted now. Behold your singer,—
A sick poor man, despised, and barely sane,
Who strove awhile to shape with palsied finger
The hard-wrung produce of a sleepless brain,
Rich but in throes,—till Death, the great balm-bringer,
Stooped down to kiss him through the deeps of pain.

V.—THE ART THAT ENDURES.

MARBLE of Paros, bronze that will not rust,
Onyx or agate,—Sculptor, choose thy block !
Not clay nor wax nor perishable stock
Of earthy stones can yield a virile bust
Keen-edged against the centuries. Strive thou must
In molten brass or adamantine rock
To carve the strenuous shape which shall not mock
Thy faith by crumbling dust upon thy dust.
Poet the warning comes not less to Thee !
Match well thy metres with a strong design.
Let noble themes find nervous utterance. Flee
The frail conceit, the weak melliluous line,
High thoughts, hard forms, toil, rigour,—these be thine,
And steadfast hopes of immortality.

VI.—CHILDHOOD AND YOUTH.

A CONTRAST.

I LOVE to watch a rout of merry boys
Released from school for play, and nothing loth
To make amends for late incurious sloth
By wild activity and strident noise ;
But more to mark the lads of larger growth
Move fieldward with such perfect equipoise,
As if constricted by an inward oath
To scorn the younger age and clamorous joys ;
Prepared no less for pastime all their own,
A silent strenuous game of hand and knee,
Where no man speaks, but a round ball is thrown
And kicked and run upon with solemn glee,
And every struggle takes an earnest tone,
And rudest sport a sober dignity.

VII.—A FOOTBALL-PLAYER.

IF I could paint you, friend, as you stand there,
Guard of the goal, defensive, open-eyed,
Watching the tortured bladder slide and glide
Under the twinkling feet ; arms bare, head bare,
The breeze a-tremble through crow-tufts of hair ;
Red-brown in face, and ruddier having spied
A wily foeman breaking from the side,
Aware of him,—of all else unaware :
If I could limn you, as you leap and fling
Your weight against his passage, like a wall ;
Clutch him and collar him, and rudely cling
For one brief moment till he falls—you fall :
My sketch would have what Art can never give,
Sinew and breath and body ; it would live.

VIII.—A CRICKET-BOWLER.

TWO minutes' rest till the next man goes in !
The tired arms lie with every sinew slack
On the mown grass. Unbent the supple back,
And elbows apt to make the leather spin
Up the slow bat and round the unwary shin,—
In knavish hands a most unkindly knack ;
But no guile shelters under this boy's black
Crisp hair, frank eyes, and honest English skin.
Two minutes only. Conscious of a name,
The new man plants his weapon with profound
Long-practised skill that no mere trick may scare.
Not loth, the rested lad resumes the game :
The flung ball takes one madding tortuous bound,
And the mid-stump three somersaults in air.

Oliver Madox Brown.

1855—1874.

OLIVER MADOX BROWN was born and reared amid surroundings in every respect conducive to the growth of talent. Member of a highly-gifted race, and connected by various ties with several leading spirits of the age, much might with justice have been expected from him. The most exalted anticipations were more than realised; the lad who passed from this life before he had completed his twentieth year not only accomplished work of permanent value but, also, work that really entitles him to a place amid the few creators of character the century has produced.

Son of Mr. Ford Madox Brown, the well-known artist, Oliver was born at Finchley, a suburb of London, on January 20th, 1855. At a very early age Oliver developed an hereditary taste for painting, and whilst quite a boy exhibited pictures of a marked originality at the Royal Academy and other leading artistic institutions. His literary aspirations were first manifested at the age of about fourteen, when he surprised his relatives by the production of some sonnets. Subsequently, disgusted that these youthful essays had been shown to friends, he obtained and destroyed the manuscripts. One sonnet, however, escaped destruction, and another, a copy of which has been recently discovered, may have belonged to the ill-fated lot. It reads thus:—

“Made indistinguishable ’mid the boughs,
With saddened weary ever-restless eyes
The weird Chameleon of the past world lies,
Like some old wretched man whom God allows
To linger on : still joyless life endows
His wasted frame, and memory never dies
Within him, and his only sympathies
Withered with his last comrade’s last carouse.
Methinks great Dante knew thee not of old
Else some fierce glutton all insatiate,
Compelled within some cage for food to wait
He must have made thee, and his verse have told
How thou in vain thy ravening tried’st to sate
On fly-like souls of triflers overbold.”

A year or two elapsed, during which period Oliver continued to study art, to paint and exhibit pictures, but, at least as far as his family knew, did nothing more in the way of literature. Nevertheless, in the winter of 1871-2 he had quietly and unostentatiously been writing the opening chapters of a romance, to be styled “The Black Swan.” At the unfortunate suggestion of the editor in whose hands the manuscript of the story was placed, the youthful author was induced—most unwillingly it is true—to alter and mutilate the work almost beyond recognition. Originally the romance was one of unlawful love, such as the greatest masters of fiction have deemed fit for their purpose ; but, to satisfy editorial scruples, Oliver eliminated the real *raison d’être* of his story—now re-christened “Gabriel Denver”—changed an outraged wife into a spiteful spinster and, contrary to all dramatic effect and poetic justice, had to forego the natural catastrophe his artistic taste had contrived, and employ a commonplace *deus ex machina*, so that the hero and heroine might be happily wedded and

dowered with the usual quantum of health, of wealth, and of beautiful progeny.

"The Black Swan," as originally conceived and executed, is among the marvels of modern literature. Dante Rossetti well characterised it as "the most robust literary effort of any imaginative kind that any one has produced at the age" its writer then was; and when one reads it the youth of the author is the last thing thought of. It is a wonderful romance for any one to have written, but as the production of a lad of Oliver's age is truly marvellous.

The publication of "Gabriel Denver" gave its youthful author claims to notice from the literary and artistic society in which he mixed, but he had already for some time past been treated on terms of equality by the distinguished people he was accustomed to meet at home and elsewhere. The success of his *début* in the literary world encouraged him to make further essays in the same direction. He commenced writing various tales and sketches which unfortunately, by intention or accident, were left unfinished. The best and longest of these works, "The Dwale Bluth"—a Devonshire name for the "Deadly Nightshade"—is a veritable masterpiece and, although to some extent fragmentary, should exist as a lasting memorial of its author's genius. The personages in the story are so lifelike that they linger in the memory as portraits of people with whom we are acquainted, whilst the bright and natural humour of these characters—humour which Mr. Theodore Watts compares with that of George Eliot's *dramatis personæ*—is redolent of their district: so faithful indeed is the local colour that, to quote the same critic again, in the perusal "you seem to be breathing Devonshire air." The

romance, although sometimes suggestive of Dickens but more often of Hawthorne, is quite original in conception and unique in execution.

Occasionally the young romancist forsook prose for poetry. Although the best of his verse is not equal to the best of his prose, he had combined with the painter's eye the poet's brain; and small as is the quantity of poetry he has left us, the quality shows that he had in him the making of a true poet.

The vigorous virility displayed in the longest of Oliver's poetic efforts—"To all Eternity"—proclaims the manliness of its author. There is not enough left of this fragment, for such it only is, to show what the plot of the piece would have been, but the argument is—

" There's no standard
In Heaven above or Hell beneath, o'er which
A woman's soul may not predominate—
May not aspire to—or degrade itself!"

As evidence of Oliver's constructive ability as a lyrical poet may be cited "Before and After."

" Ah! long ago since I or thou
Glanced past these moorlands brow to brow,
Our mixed hair streaming down the wind—
So fleet! so sweet!
I loved thy footsteps more than thou
Loved my whole soul and body through—
So sweet! so fleet! ere Fate outgrew the days wherein
Life sinned!

" And ah! the deep steep days of shame
Whose dread hopes shrivelled ere they came
Or vanished down Love's nameless void—
So dread! so dead!

Dread hope stripped dead from each soul's shame—
Soulless alike for praise or blame—

Too dead to dread the eternities whose heaven its shame
destroyed !”

This lyric, written for a romance its author was then working on, is an artistic and skilful piece of versification no bard need be ashamed to acknowledge the paternity of. The following stanzas are equally typical of his poetic powers:—

“Oh delirious sweetness which lingers
Over the fond lips of love !
Hair-tendrils clinging to fingers
Tangled in blossom above !
Intense eyes which burn with a light made
No man knows whereof !
Sweet lips grown more subtle than nightshade
More soft than plumes of a dove !

“But love, like a fleet dream eluding
The desire of a wakening sleeper,
Love, grown too fondly excluding,
Consumes the heart deeper and deeper
In a passionate waste of desire !
Like the flame of a desert which rages,
Our love shall extend through the ages
Though our souls blow asunder like fire.

“Oh reluctantly lingering breath !
Oh longing with sorrow requited !
Oh blossom the storm-winds have blighted
Deep down in the shadow of death !”

Yet after all it must be confessed that Oliver Madox Brown was not a great poet in the sense that he was a great prose writer.

His career was almost devoid of what the world deems incident. A visit to Dante Rossetti at Kelmscott, an ancient manor-house near Lechlade, was a bright point in his life, whilst the darkest sorrow he endured was an act of literary injustice one

less sensitive might have scarcely suffered under, but which has been deemed, and not without some probability, to have accelerated his premature death. The lateness of the hours he kept and the continual excitement to which he was subjected were doubtless, also, injurious to him at his age, and conducive to the weakening of his constitution. Although occasionally troubled by headaches and other slight ailments, nothing in Oliver's health gave rise to apprehension until September 1874, when he was too unwell to accompany his relatives to the seaside. A temporary rally enabled him to rejoin them, but after a few days he was compelled to return to London, where, on November 5th, 1874, the anniversary of the publication of his one book, he died of blood-poisoning. After his death his works were collected and published in two volumes, with a short biographical introduction. The full story of his life was published in one volume by the present writer in 1883.

Oliver's idiosyncrasies were strongly marked; his likes and dislikes being very pronounced. For a youth his affection for children was remarkable, whilst his fondness for animals, especially for those commonly regarded as repulsive, was singularly ardent. From early childhood he had been accustomed to the society of talented people, and was listened to and treated by them as an equal. He regarded popular idols with contempt, and was generally cold and reserved in his demeanour, but when discussing any subject that really interested him and aroused his enthusiasm his conversation fairly sparkled with brilliancy.

JOHN H. INGRAM.

POEMS.

OLIVER MADOX BROWN.

I.—TO ALL ETERNITY.

(A FRAGMENT.)

“Incutiens blandum per pectora amarum.”

GOD! what a soul that woman had! Ah me!
My own grows chill within me. There's no standard
In Heaven above or Hell beneath, o'er which
A woman's soul may not predominate—
May not aspire to—or degrade itself!

* * * * *

Once she was almost beautiful. Her eyes
Shone glittering; twin stars plucked from the abyss
Of God's most fathomless soul; twin mysteries,
So deep your drowned brain whirled in them, so bright
That even their colour seemed a mystery—
When the emotional keen spirit flashed forth
Its scintillant electricities. Her eyes
Kindled and shone like flames blown in the wind
That day when first we met—For [] they made
A boy's soul luminous, where now they burn
The grown man's soul to death!

Ah love! love! love!

Whose unintelligible promptings lure
Earth's mightiest nerves to thralldom—whose deep magic,
Too swift for timorous after-thought, too deep
For present doubt, makes blind the brain—whose hands
Mould this man's heaven from that man's hell—whose gaze
Infatuates—whose wind-shod feet resume
The joys its hands disperse—whose yearnings storm
Heaven with their high intentions, ere God paves
Hell's wildest depths with them! Oh love! love! love!
My soul and thine were even as one with hers
When first that glance met mine.

That day the sun
Smote round our ivy-clad old hall till all

Its redolent green turned grey. The floodland meadows
Sultry and odorous sickened me, and I,
Tired of the sunlight too, with all my brain
Plunged in some nameless ecstasy, sought refuge
Deep in the sheltered hollows of a wood
Full of melodious silence and soft whispers
Of wind-lent life among still boughs, that fringed
The foot of the hills beyond. . . .

The stillness grew

So deep at last that I could hear my heart
Throb like an echoing footfall. Once a thrush
Broke through the brambles with wild amorous cries;
And as I marked its startled flight, the trees
Reeled in my sight till all their foliage
Seemed whirling in a dream.

How long I wandered

Dreaming my soul out thus, I know not ; only
I think a sudden rustle under foot
Broke up my reverie at last, and I
Stepped back o' the instant. Stretched across my path
Swift-striped and sibilant-fanged a viper crawled
From one stone to another, and disappeared
Even as I watched it.

Oh my God ! had I

Only but known that sign for what it meant !
But that same instant a low tremulous sound
Passed like a sigh in the wind—which faltering
(Like to the first drops of an April shower)
Died quite away : only to recommence,
Until at last its sweetness reached a pitch
So sweet—so incommunicably sweet,
That all my blood turned fire within my veins,
And my heart sank within me. Then I knew
It was a woman's voice that sang.

The wood

Grew thinner thereabouts—for presently
 I broke into a glade where the warm sun
 Pierced through at random, and, just slipping round
 The weather-beaten trunk of a huge oak
 Stepped out into the light. How shall I tell
 What happened there? For first I stood half dazed
 In one great blaze of sunlight. Then there came
 A sharp stroke on my side, and I reeled back
 Breathless and stupefied; whilst a shrill scream
 Rang in mine ears. Just hovering past my face
 I saw the suspended figure of a girl
 Nigh grown to womanhood mount high i' the air
 Some moments yct ere she could stay herself.
 She had been swinging as she sang, her rope
 Fast to the boughs o'erhead; and I it seemed
 Had stepped before her unawares, her song
 Still on her lips low-lingering; till it changed
 Into that frightened scream.

And now she stopped,
 Sprang to the earth, and disappeared ere I
 Could gain my feet again; I only caught
 One brief glance of her face—then she was gone.

* * * * *

II.—GIPSY SONG.

THE growth of love's fruit is
 Most meet to eat;
 Yet a snare where the root is
 Entangles the feet.
 To passion no stop is
 When true love hath sinned;
 But the flower that love's crop is
 Droops dead i' the wind.

III.—LAURA'S SONG.

ALAS ! who knows or cares, my love,
If our love live or die,—
If thou thy frailty, sweet, should prove,
Or my soul thine deny ?
Yet merging sorrow in delight,
Love's dream disputes our devious night.

None know, sweet love, nor care a thought
For our heart's vague desire,
Nor if our longing come to nought,
Or burn in aimless fire ;
Let them alone, we'll waste no sighs :
Cling closer, love, and close thine eyes !

IV.—SONNET.

(PREFIXED TO THE MS. OF "THE BLACK SWAN.")

NO more these passion-worn faces shall men's eyes
Behold in life. Death leaves no trace behind
Of their wild hate, and wilder love, grown blind
In desperate longing, more than the foam which lies
Splashed up awhile where the showered spray describes
The waves whereto their cold limbs were resigned ;
Yet ever doth the sea-wind's undefined
Vague wailing shudder with their dying sighs.
For all men's souls 'twixt sorrow and love are cast
As on the earth each lingers his brief space,
While surely nightfall comes where each man's face
In death's obliteration sinks at last
As a deserted wind-tossed sea's foam-trace—
Life's chilled boughs emptied by death's autumn-blast.

William Sharp.

1856.

WILLIAM SHARP who, though he has of late devoted himself mainly to prose, became first known as a poet, was born at Garthland Place, in the neighbourhood of Paisley, in the year 1856. From school he proceeded to the University of Glasgow, and afterwards spent a considerable time in travel. Returning to England he made the acquaintance of Dante Rossetti, whose biography he afterwards wrote, and published his first two volumes of verse, "The Human Inheritance; Transcripts from Nature; and Other Poems" (1882) and "Earth's Voices" (1884), with the same sub-title as the previous book. In 1888 he published "Romantic Ballads and Poems of Phantasy," and in 1891, "Sospiri di Roma." Mr. Sharp is probably best known by his popular anthology, "Sonnets of this Century," but he has more or less distinguished himself as biographer, critic, and novelist, and is certainly one of the most industrious of our living men of letters. In the mere form of Mr. Sharp's poetry there is doubtless a large derivative element; but there is an individuality of observation and emotion which forbids its classification among merely derivative work, and his "Transcripts from Nature" justify their title: they are the work of one who knows, and in whom knowledge provides the soil for a growth of fine

emotion. In many of the early poems there is more of outline than of atmosphere ; but that Mr. Sharp can provide imaginative vision as well as literal transcription is made abundantly clear by his more recent performances in verse. The earlier volumes contained much that was beautiful, and at least one poem that was markedly strong in conception and treatment—the poem entitled “Motherhood,” Part I. of which is given in the following pages (p. 503). The shorter poems are, for the most part, less arresting, but many of them have the simple quiet beauty to be seen in “The Song of Flowers,” which, though a poem of fancy rather than of imagination, has a delicate charm :—

“What is a bird but a living flower?
A flower but the soul of some dead bird?
And what is a weed but the dying breath
Of a perjured word?

“A flower is the soul of a singing-bird,
Its scent is the breath of an old-time song :
But a weed and a thorn spring forth each day
For a new-done wrong.

“Dead souls of song-birds, thro’ the green grass,
Or deep in the midst of the golden grain,
In woodland valley, where hill-streams pass,
We flourish again.

“We flowers are the joy of the whole wide earth,
Sweet Nature’s laughter and secret tears—
Whoso hearkens a bird in its spring-time mirth
The song of a flow’r-soul hears !”

The “Romantic Ballads and Poems of Phantasy” were written, as all poetry worthy the name must be, in obedience to an impulse of creation and expression ; but also in a minor degree, in ex-

pression of a conviction that modern verse—even the verse which is most saturated with the spirit of romanticism is too obviously literary, and therefore, in a sense, artificial; and that a time has come for a return to the spontaneous naturalism of a more unsophisticated day. “Even Rossetti,” writes Mr. Sharp, in his dedicatory introduction, “is too literary. Let any unprejudiced lover of imaginative poetry read ‘Thomas the Rhymer,’ or ‘Clerk Saunders,’ ‘Sir Roland,’ or ‘Sir Patrick Spens,’ and thereafter take up that magnificent ballad-poem, ‘The King’s Tragedy,’ and he will probably more or less acutely realise how the latter loses in effect wherever it is most literary.” The criticism is here indubitably sound, but there may be some doubt as to the validity of the inference to be drawn from it. It may be a misfortune that our present-day poetry is too literary, but is it not an inevitable misfortune which is not without its compensations? A man cannot jump off his shadow, and in an age to which simplicity and *naïveté* are alien the very assumption of these qualities is deliberate, reminiscent, and therefore “literary.” In this very volume, which protests so much, we have, for example, a poem entitled “Phantasy,” which, with all its beauties, is clearly lacking in the charm of spontaneity, and is indeed nothing but a recognisable echo of Keats’s “La Belle Dame Sans Merci.” As a matter of fact, a reproduction of the spirit of the old ballads is now impossible. Nothing is possible but what is really an imitation—a deliberate self-conscious assumption of their form and air; and Mr. Sharp’s success in such an assumption is evident in the simplicity, directness, and imaginative force

of "Mad Madge o' Cree." As an illustration of Mr. Sharp's efforts in a form to which he has given much attention, we may quote his sonnet, "Spring Wind":—

"O full-voiced herald of immaculate spring,
With clarion gladness striking every tree
To answering raptures, as a resonant sea
Fills rock-bound shores with thunders echoing—
O thou, each beat of whose tempestuous wing
Shakes the long winter sleep from hill and lea,
And rouses with loud reckless jubilant glee
The birds that have not dared as yet to sing:—

"O Wind that comest with prophetic cries,
Hast thou indeed beheld the face that is
The joy of poets and the glory of birds—
Spring's face itself:—hast thou 'neath bluer skies
Met the warm lips that are the gates of bliss,
And heard June's leaf-like whisper of sweet words!"

The "Sospiri di Roma" do not call for lengthened comment. The loose, unrhymed measures in which the poems are written lend themselves too readily to fluent diffusiveness, and the poems themselves are undoubtedly marred by this defect; but there is then a certain exquisiteness of emotional apprehension with here and there a passage of really successful rendering, in virtue of which they possess an attractiveness often lacking in more faultless performances. They could not have been written by any one but a poet; and here, as elsewhere in Mr. Sharp's work, there are clear indications of power which has needed only a concentration of energy to make itself effectual.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

MOTHERHOOD.

WILLIAM SHARP.

(PART I.)

BENEATH the awful full-orbed moon
The silent tracts of wild rice lay
Dumb since the fervid heart of noon

Bent thro' the burning Indian day ;
And still as some far tropic sea
Where no winds murmur, no waves be.

The bended, seeded tops alone
Swayed in the sleepy sultry wind,
Which came and went with frequent moan
As though some dying place to find ;
While at sharp intervals there rang
The fierce cicala's piercing clang.

Deep mid the rice-fields green-hued gloom
A tigress lay, with birth-throes ta'en ;
Her swaying tail swept o'er her womb
As if to sweep away the pain
That clutched her by the gold-barred thighs
And shook her throat with snarling cries.

Her white teeth tore the wild-rice stems ;
And as she moaned her green eyes grew
Lurid like shining baleful gems
With fires volcanic lighten'd through.
While froth fell from her churning jaws
Upon her skin-drawn gleaming claws.

As in a dream at some strange sound
The soul doth seem to freeze, so she
Lay fixt like marble on the ground,
Changed in a moment : suddenly
A far-off roar of savage might
Boomed through the silent, sultry night.

Her eyes grew large, and flamed with fire ;
Her body seemed to feel the sound
And thrill therewith, as thrills a lyre
When wild wind wakes it with a bound
And sweeps its strong-clasp'd soul along
In waves of melancholy song.

Her answering howl swept back again
And eddied to her far mate's ear ;
Then once again the travail pain
Beat at the heart that knew no fear,
But some new instinct seem'd to rise
And yearn and wonder in her eyes.

Did presage of the coming birth
Light up her life with mother-love,
As winds along the morning earth
Whisper of golden dawn above ?
Or was it but some sweet wild thought
Remember'd vaguely ere forgot.

* * * * *

But once again the bitter strife
Of wrestling sinews shook her there ;
And soon a little mewling life
Met her bewildered yearning stare ;
Till, through her pain, the tigress strove
With licking tongue her love to prove.

No longer fearless flamed the light
Of great green eyes straight thro' the gloom,
Each nerve seem'd laden with affright,
The eyes expectant of some doom ;
The very moonlight's steady glare
Beat hungrily about her lair.

A beetle rose, and hummed, and hung
A moment ere it fled—but great
In face of peril to her young
The tigress rose, supreme in hate
And, with tail switching and lips drawn
The unreal foe scowled out upon.

And when a mighty cobra, coiled
Amid the tangled grass roots near,
Hissed out his hunger, her blood boiled
With rage that left no room for fear,
Till, with a howl that shook the dark,
She sprang and left him cold and stark.

But when a feeble hungry wail
Smote on her yearning ears she turn'd
With velvet paws and reluctant tail
And eyes that no more flashed and burn'd,
But flamed throughout the solemn night
Like lamps of soft sweet yellow light

To where her young was ; where she lay
Silent, and full of some strange love
Long hours. Along the star-strewn way
A comet flashed and flamed above,
And where great wastes of solemn blue
Spread starless, sailed the vast moon through.

No sound disturb'd the tigress, save
Stray jackals, or some wild boar's pant
Where thickest did the tall rice wave,
Or trump of distant elephant ;
Or, when these fill'd the night no more,
The Tiger's deep, tremendous roar.

ROMANTIC BALLADS AND POEMS OF
PHANTASY.

1888.

WILLIAM SHARP.

MAD MADGE O' CREE.

HITHER and thither, to and fro,
She wander'd o'er the bleak hill-sides ;
She watch'd the wild Sound toss and flow,
And the water-kelpies lead the tides.

She heard the wind upon the hill
Or wailing wild across the muir,
And answered it with laughter shrill
And mocked its eldritch lure.

Within the running stream she heard
A music such as none may hear ;
The voice of every beast and bird
Had meaning for her ear.

“What seek ye thus, fair Margery ?
Ye know your Ranald's dead :
Win hame, my bonnie lass, wi' me,
Win hame to hearth and bed !”

“Hark ! hear ye not the corbie call—
It shrills, *Come owre the glen,*
For Ranald standeth fair and tall
Amid his shadow-men !”

“‘His shadow-men,’ O Margery !
’Tis of the dead ye speak :
Synce they are in the saut deep sea
What gars ye phantoms seek ?”

“Hark, hark ye not the curlew wail
 May Margery, mak haste,
For Ranald wanders sad and pale
 About the lonely waste.”

“O Margery, what is’t ye say :
 Your Ranald’s dead and drowned.
Neither by night, neither by day,
 Sall your fair love be found.”

“He is not dead, for I hae seen
 His bonnie gowden hair :
Within his arms I’ve claspit been,
 An’ I have dreamit there :

“Last night I stood by green Craigmor
 And watch’d the foaming tide :
And there across the moonlit shore
 A shadow sought my side.

“But when he kissed me soft and sweet,
 And faintly ca’d tae me,
I rose an’ took his hand an’ fleet
 We sought the Caves o’ Cree.

“Ah, there we kissed, my love and I :
 An’ there sad songs he sang
O’ how dead men drift wearily
 ’Mid sea-wrack lank and lang.

“And once my wan love whisper’d low
 How mid the sea-weeds deep
As but yestreen he drifted slow
 He saw me lying asleep—

“Aye sound in sleep beneath the wave
 Wi’ shells an’ sea-things there,
And as the tide swept o’er my grave
 It stirred like weed my hair :

“ In vain, ah, all in vain, he tried
To reach an’ clasp my hand,
To lay his body by my side
Upon that shell-strewn strand.

But ah, within the Caves o’ Cree
He kissed my lips full fain—
Ay, by the hollow booming sea
We’ll meet, my love, again.”

That night again fair Margery
In Cree-Caves slept full sound,
And by her side lay lovingly
The wan wraith of the drowned.

O what is yon toss-tossing there
Where a’ the white gulls fly :
Is yon gold weed or golden hair
The waves swirl merrily ?

O what is yon white shape that slips
Among the lapsing seas :
Pale, pale the rose-red of the lips
Whereo’er the spindrift flees.

What bears the tide unto the strand
Where the drown’d seaman lies :
A waving arm, a hollow hand,
And face with death-dimmed eyes.

The tide uplifts them, leaves them where
Each first knew love beside the sea :
Bound each to each with yellow hair
Within the Caves o’ Cree.

Oscar Wilde.

1856.

MR. OSCAR WILDE, whose full name is Oscar Fingall O'Flahertie Wills Wilde, was born in Dublin on the 15th of October, 1856. His father, Sir William Wilde, was a surgeon, who practised in Dublin, and who, in 1853, was appointed surgeon-oculist to the Queen; he also served on three occasions as Census Commissioner for Ireland, in recognition of which service he was knighted in 1864. He was a man of literary tastes and antiquarian research; and, in addition to several medical works, wrote "The Beauties of the Boyne," "A Catalogue of the Antiquities in the Royal Irish Academy," and other works. The poet's mother, Lady Wilde, was a contributor to *The Nation* newspaper, for which she wrote a number of poems, which she signed with the *nom de plume* Speranza. These poems, which were devoted to the national cause, were afterwards reprinted in volume form. Lady Wilde also translated several works from the French and German languages.

Mr. Oscar Wilde was educated at Portora Royal School, Enniskillen, and Trinity College, Dublin, where he obtained a classical scholarship at the early age of sixteen, winning in the following year the Berkley gold medal for Greek, and at Magdalen College, Oxford, where he also obtained a scholarship.

At Oxford he attended the lectures of Mr. Ruskin, and joined with those who, under Mr. Ruskin's leadership, sought physical strength in the muscular exercise of road-making. Mr. Wilde's rooms were exceptionally well situated, commanding a fine view of the Cherwell; and, under the inspiration of Mr. Ruskin's teaching, he added to their attractiveness by elaborate decoration and artistic furnishing. He took a first in classical moderations 1876, and a first in *Literis Humanioribus* in 1878, and winning the Newdigate prize with a poem on "Ravenna" in the same year, finally took his degree. At intervals he had travelled in Greece and Italy, and had written poems, some of which were published in *The Month*, *The Catholic Monitor*, and *The Irish Monthly*, and some also in a magazine entitled *Kottabos*, conducted by members of Trinity College, Dublin. Many of these were reprinted in a volume bearing title "Poems by Oscar Wilde" (1881). This volume did not receive generous treatment at the hands of the press. It was met by a not unnatural prejudice, born of the extravagances of some of the followers of the æsthetic movement, and its faults were looked for, and dwelt upon, with much more avidity than its merits; and yet, with all its faults of over-elaboration and "sweetness long drawn out," the volume was a remarkable production for a young man of twenty-five years of age. If it betrays the influence of older poets, this is no more than can be said of the earlier works of the older poets themselves; and it cannot be denied that it displays many of the qualities which are held of high value in modern poetry. His work represents, to quote Mr. Stedman's "Victorian

Poets," "a phase of the æsthetic crusade in defence of poetry as an utterance of the beautiful solely,—a movement," he adds, "having almost perfect development at its start with Keats so long ago." "Charmides," the longest poem in the book, describes how the hero obtained access to the sacred temple of Minerva, and the vengeance taken by the irate goddess for the intrusion. "This poem abounds," says Mr. Walter Hamilton, in his work "*The Æsthetic Movement in England*," "with both the merits and the faults of Mr. Oscar Wilde's style,—it is classical, sad, voluptuous, and full of passages of the most exquisitely musical word painting; but it is cloying from its very sweetness—the elaboration of its details makes it over luscious." "'The Garden of Eros,' 'The Burden of Itys,' and 'Charmides,'" says Mr. Stedman, "are examples of the sensuous pseudo-classicism. There is a good deal of Keats, and something of Swinburne, in Wilde's pages; but his best master is Milton, whom he has studied, as did Keats, with good effect. His scholarship and cleverness are evident, as well as a native poetic gift." It is, however, in the group of poems entitled "*Eleutheria*" that he makes his strongest appeal to the robust and healthy mind. "*Ave Imperatrix*," a lyric to England (p. 513), is, as Mr. Stedman says, "manly verse—a poetic and eloquent invocation"; and some of the sonnets are anything but what might be expected from the much-misrepresented and over-much-caricatured "apostle of artistic house decoration and dress reform." Perhaps the worst thing that can be said about Mr. Wilde as a poet, is that he has not followed his own lead with larger and more important contributions to

poetic art ; but this is open to the explanation that devotion to other departments of literature and the drama have left him but little leisure for poetic composition.

In 1882 Mr. Wilde visited America, lecturing at New York, Boston, and elsewhere. He has since contributed to journalism, fiction, and the drama. Among his efforts in the latter direction may be named "*Salomé*," a drama written in French on the story of Herod and Herodias, for performance, with Madame Sarah Bernhardt as the principal character. This play was refused dramatic licence by the Lord Chamberlain on account of its subject ; but it has since been published (1893), and the English public are able to read it, if not to see it performed. It is a striking tragedy, powerful in conception and treatment. An earlier product of Mr. Wilde's pen was the drama "*Lady Windermere's Fan*," and a later play "*A Woman of No Importance*," first produced at the Haymarket Theatre, April 19th, 1893. His other works include "*The Happy Prince and other Tales*" (1888), "*A House of Pomegranates*" (1891), "*Lord Arthur Savil's Crime and other Stories*" (1891), and "*The Picture of Dorian Gray*" (1891),—all volumes of stories which contain much poetic writing and sparkling dialogue. The volume "*Intentions*" (1891), is a collection of essays which shows Mr. Wilde in the character of a critic. Probably the best is that on "*The Decay of Lying*."

ALFRED H. MILES.

POEMS.

1881.

OSCAR WILDE.

I.—AVE IMPERATRIX.

SET in this stormy Northern Sea,
Queen of these restless fields of tide,
England ! what shall men say of thee,
Before whose feet the worlds divide ?

The earth, a brittle globe of glass,
Lies in the hollow of thine hand,
And through its heart of crystal pass,
Like shadows through a twilight land,
The spears of crimson-suited war,
The long, white-crested waves of fight,
And all the deadly fires which are
The torches of the lords of night.

The yellow leopards, strained and lean,
The treacherous Russian knows so well
With gaping blackened jaws are seen
Leap through the hail of screaming shell.

The strong sea-lion of England's wars
Hath left his sapphire cave of sea,
To battle with the storm that mars
The star of England's chivalry.

The brazen-throated clarion blows
Across the Pathan's reedy fen,
And the high steep of Indian snows
Shake to the tread of armed men.

And many an Afghan chief, who lies
Beneath his cool pomegranate-trees,
Clutches his sword in fierce surmise
When on the mountain side he sees

The fleet-foot Marri scout, who comes
To tell how he hath heard afar
The measured roll of English drums
Beat at the gates of Kandahar.
For southern wind and east wind meet
Where, girt and crowned by sword and fire
England with bare and bloody feet
Climbs the steep road of wide empire.
O lonely Himalayan height
Gray pillar of the Indian sky,
Where saw'st thou last in clanging flight
Our wingèd dogs of victory?
The almond-groves of Samarcand,
Bokhara, where red lilies blow;
And Oxus, by whose yellow sand
The grave white-turbaned merchants go:
And on from thence to Ispahan,
The gilded garden of the sun,
Whence the long dusty caravan
Brings cedar and vermilion;
And that dread city of Cabool
Set at the mountain's scarpèd feet,
Whose marble tanks are ever full
With water for the noonday heat:
Where through the narrow straight Bazaar
A little maid Circassian
Is led, a present from the Czar
Unto some old and bearded khan,—
Here have our wild war-eagles flown,
And flapped wide wings in fiery fight;
But the sad dove, that sits alone
In England—she hath no delight.

In vain the laughing girl will lean
To greet her love with love-lit eyes :
Down in some treacherous black ravine
Clutching his flag, the dead boy lies.

And many a moon and sun will see
The lingering wistful children wait
To climb upon their father's knee ;
And in each house made desolate
Pale women who have lost their lord
Will kiss the relics of the slain—
Some tarnished epaulette—some sword—
Poor toys to soothe sad anguished pain.

For not in quiet English fields
Are these, our brothers, lain to rest,
Where we might deck their broken shields
With all the flowers the dead love best :

For some are by the Delhi walls,
And many in the Afghan land,
And many where the Ganges falls
Through seven mouths of shifting sand.

And some in Russian waters lie,
And others in the seas which are
The portals of the East, or by
The wind-swept heights of Trafalgar.

O wandering graves ! O restless sleep !
O silence of the sunless day !
O still ravine ! O stormy deep !
Give up your prey ! give up your prey !

And thou whose wounds are never healed
Whose weary race is never won,
O Cromwell's England ! must thou yield
For every inch of ground a son ?

Go ! crown with thorns thy gold-crowned head
Change thy glad song to song of pain ;
Wind and wild wave have got thy dead,
And will not yield them back again.
Wave and wild wind and foreign shore
Possess the flower of English land—
Lips that thy lips shall kiss no more,
Hands that shall never clasp thy hand.
What profit now that we have bound
The whole round world with nets of gold,
If hidden in our heart is found
The care that groweth never old ?
What profit that our galleys ride,
Pine-forest-like, on every main ?
Ruin and wreck are at our side,
Grim warders of the House of pain.
Where are the brave, the strong, the fleet ?
Where is our English chivalry ?
Wild grasses are their burial sheet,
And sobbing waves their threnody.
O loved ones lying far away,
What word of love can dead lips send !
O wasted dust ! O senseless clay !
Is this the end ? is this the end ?
Peace, peace ! we wrong the noble dead
To vex their solemn slumber so ;
Though childless, and with thorn-crowned head,
Up the steep road must England go.
Yet when this fiery web is spun,
Her watchmen shall descry from far
The young Republic like a sun
Rise from these crimson seas of war.

II.—APOLOGIA.

IS it thy will that I should wax and wane,
Barter my cloth of gold for hodden-grey,
And at thy pleasure weave that web of pain
Whose brightest threads are each a wasted day?

Is it thy will—Love that I love so well—
That my Soul's House should be a tortured spot
Wherein, like evil paramours, must dwell
The quenchless flame, the worm that dieth not?

Nay, if it be thy will I shall endure,
And sell ambition at the common mart,
And let dull failure be my vestiture,
And sorrow dig its grave within my heart.

Perchance it may be better so—at least
I have not made my heart a heart of stone,
Nor starved my boyhood of its goodly feast,
Nor walked where Beauty is a thing unknown.

Many a man hath done so; sought to fence,
In straitened bonds, the soul that should be free,
Trodden the dusty road of common sense,
While all the forest sang of liberty.

Not marking how the spotted hawk in flight
Passed on wide pinions through the lofty air
To where the steep untrodden mountain height
Caught the last tresses of the Sun God's hair.

Or how the little flower he trod upon,
The daisy, that white-feathered shield of gold,
Followed with wistful eyes the wandering sun
Content if once its leaves were aureoled.

But surely it is something to have been
The best-belovèd for a little while,
To have walked hand in hand with Love and seen
His purple wings flit once across thy smile.

Ay! though the gorgèd asp of passion feed
On my boy's heart, yet have I burst the bars,
Stood face to face with Beauty, know indeed
The Love which moves the Sun and all the stars.

III.—REQUIESCAT.

TREAD lightly, she is near
Under the snow,
Speak gently, she can hear
The daisies grow.

All her bright golden hair
Tarnished with rust,
She that was young and fair
Fallen to dust.

Lily-like, white as snow,
She hardly knew
She was a woman, so
Sweetly she grew.

Coffin board, heavy stone,
Lie on her breast,
I vex my heart alone
SHE is at rest.

Peace, peace, she cannot hear
Lyre or sonnet,
All my life's buried here,
Heap earth upon it.

IV.—ON THE SALE BY AUCTION OF KEATS' LOVE LETTERS.

THESE are the letters which Endymion wrote
To one he loved in secret, and apart.

And now the brawlers of the auction mart
Bargain and bid for each poor blotted note,
Aye for each separate pulse of passion quote
The merchant's price: I think they love not art,
Who break the crystal of a poet's heart
That small and sickly eyes may glare and gloat.

Is it not said that many years ago,
In a far Eastern town, some soldiers ran
With torches through the midnight, and began
To wrangle for mean raiment, and to throw
Dice for the garments of a wretched man,
Not knowing the God's wonder, or His woe!

V.—LIBERTATIS SACRA FAMES.

ALBEIT nurtured in democracy,
And liking best that state republican
Where every man is Kinglike and no man
Is crowned above his fellows, yet I see,
Spite of this modern fret for Liberty,
Better the rule of One whom all obey
Than to let clamorous demagogues betray
Our freedom with the kiss of anarchy.
Wherefore I love them not whose hands profane
Plant the red flag upon the piled-up street
For no right cause, beneath whose ignorant reign
Arts, Culture, Reverence, Honour, all things fade,
Save Treason and the dagger of her trade
And Murder with his silent bloody feet.

VI.—TO MILTON.

MILTON ! I think thy spirit hath passed away
From these white cliffs, and high embattled towers;
This gorgeous fiery-coloured world of ours
Seems fallen into ashes dull and grey,
And the age changed into a mimic play
Wherein we waste our else too-crowded hours :
For all our pomp and pageantry of powers
We are but fit to delve the common clay,
Seeing this little isle on which we stand,
This England, this sea-lion of the sea,
By ignorant demagogues is held in fee,
Who love her not : Dear God ! is this the land
Which bare a triple empire in her hand
When Cromwell spake the word Democracy ?

VII.—HELAS !

TO drift with every passion till my soul
Is a stringed lute on which all winds can play,
Is it for this that I have given away
Mine ancient wisdom, and austere control ?
Methinks my life is a twice-written scroll,
Scrawled over on some boyish holiday
With idle songs for pipe and virelay,
Which do but mar the secret of the whole.
Surely there was a time I might have trod
The sunlit heights, and from life's dissonance
Struck one clear chord to reach the ears of God :
Is that time dead ? lo ! with a little rod
I did but touch the honey of romance—
And must I lose a soul's inheritance ?

A. Mary F. Darmesteter.

1857.

AGNES MARY FRANCES ROBINSON, now Madame James Darmesteter, was born at Leamington, February 27th, 1857. She is the daughter of Mr. George T. Robinson; her younger sister, Frances Mabel Robinson, is one of the most powerful of the younger novelists of the day. Miss Robinson lived in London until her marriage in 1888 with M. James Darmesteter, Professor of Persian in the Collège de France and the Ecole des Hautes Etudes. Since her marriage she has lived in Paris, where her salon is one of the centres of Parisian letters and learning.

Madame Darmesteter is the spoilt child of literature—of two literatures. If she has attained or preserved any originality, it is in spite of the kindness of Fate and her friends. Her surroundings have always been only too perfect. Growing up in a literary house, with all the London singers about her, and the sound of verse in the very air, she naturally signalled her coming of age by the publication of a volume of poems. She and her book were welcomed together, not more than they deserved to be, but without the discipline of waiting. And she and her books have always been very fortunate. Her triste muse has had the task of inventing a delicate misery which (happily!) has never existed. All this was an admirable lot in life, and an excellent

education for a singer who should be content to sing to a borrowed lute. And at first she was content. But even then one heard the new voice. The delicious "Handful of Honeysuckle"—a title taken from one of the Elizabethan miscellanies—could have been written only when it was written. It belongs to that delightful, youthful time when books like "The Gallery of Pigeons" were possible—so romantic and rococo, so absurd, so inspiriting, so exuberantly poetic. Miss Robinson's book had fantasies of Queen Rosalys, Paradise fancies from some pre-Raphaelite heaven of rose, lily, and girasole, French refrains culled "In Apollo's Garden," triolets, sonnets, and songs with the faint odour about them of "rose-leaves when the rose is dead." There were little narratives and little apologues, like bits of old tapestry or illuminated missal margins. And with all this—so much of it is only an echo—an individuality, even in the echo, and, in certain pieces, the personal note. There could be no mistake about the singing-voice—a new singing-voice in the lyric nest of those days. What was most notable in the volume was an infinite devotion to art, the passion of the genuine artist, that might seem to augur well, and yet be dangerous, for the future. Too passionate a devotion, one might have feared, dreading a virtuosity which is often fatal to those who love Art too well. Too well? Let us say, rather, with too narrow, too exclusive, a fondness. The next volume, three years later, came with a piece of serious and earnest work, a strenuous translation of the "Crowned Hippolytus" of Euripides. Poetic drill of this sort could not but be useful to the writer, and among the original

pieces one noticed some which might be said to mark an advance in endeavour, in aim, if not exactly in accomplishment. "The New Arcadia" of 1884 marks, in a sense, a further advance, but an advance along a side-route, through bad country. These heavily tragic poems of such peasant life as Balzac could deal with, overstrained, ineffective as they are, do really indicate growth. Life, now for the first time, has been apprehended—with a frightened recoil, naturally, of the sleeper awakened. The book was inspired by Bastien-Lepage's great picture, "Les Foins," now in the Luxembourg. In that dull peasant face, in those limbs on which the whole weight of the heat rests visibly, there is indeed something of the inarticulate mournfulness of lives lived out blindly, hopelessly, often brutally, under the sun. With that feeling of the pity of it, there comes to her a feeling which in its elementary stage is too crude for art. She makes an attempt, fruitlessly, to paint episodes of tragic life, broadly, in powerful colours. Life for a moment has been too much for art; and that is well, but not in its immediate effect. She feels that everything is changed—that she has done with dreams, that the misery of the world has left her individual joys and pains colourless. "I have lost my singing-voice!" she laments, disproving the statement by some magical poems, that have the savour and colour of the South in them, and, here delicately and rightly, the personal note.

In 1886 came "An Italian Garden," which remains the crown and flower of her poetic work. The dreamer has fallen back into the circle of dreams, but the dreams can never again be of that mere

heaven in arabesque and embroidery. There is a human note in them, a note of sincerity, in what is still often a dainty make-believe—a make-believe of despair, a *décor* of cypresses, which, however, doubtless answers to something genuine—a pensiveness, a gentle melancholy—in this nature which has come through art to take an interest in life. The singing-voice, so long and so well trained, has now the true ring, the instinctive perfection of note. And how sweet and fresh and fine, simple and unstrained always, spontaneously lyrical, is this singing-voice, are these songs! Slight, one may say: well, slight, but how perfect, and how difficult to achieve perfection here—in this rose-leaf charm, this liquid melody, like falling water or a bird's voice! Another volume, two years later—"Songs, Ballads, and a Garden Play"—is much in the manner of the "Italian Garden," but scarcely so fresh, varied, and exquisite. It has something new in the shape of ballads, distinctly well written, but not the individual work of a sheer lyrist, with a little dramatic scene, which was worth writing for the sake of the song it contains.

Madame Darmesteter has written prose, but it is rather too much the prose of a poet. A book on Emily Brontë deals sympathetically and picturesquely with that splendid woman and great writer, whose life was the saddest of tragedies. "Arden," a novel, can be read with pleasure, but it cannot be said to show any natural faculty for novel-writing. "The End of the Middle Ages," is a series of essays—studies towards a serious historical work, "The French in Italy," which will be a history of the French wars in Italy between the battle of Poitiers

and the battle of Agincourt. Why should a poet write history? one may query. But Madame Darmesteter is devoted to her work, and will tell you that it is the history of a chimæra, and therefore enters into a poet's proper regions.

Madame Darmesteter's progress in poetry from an unreal fancifulness, by way of a foiled attempt at dogged realism, to a fancifulness which is the flowering of the true reality, cannot but be interesting to observe. The girl who would scribble whole poems in metrical signs—the words to be added afterwards, the metre being the main thing—has learnt much. She has come to understand both what should be done, and what she herself can do. She has a wholesome love for poetry where it is most poetry—the song, the short poem. Heine has taught her much, and it is perhaps from him that she has learnt to be so simple, direct and brief—to be so modern. Her poetry, as she now writes it, is very modern. Despite her summer inspirations—for hers is a muse that hates the winter—she has the intensity of troubled sentiment that is at least some part of modernity nowadays. Perhaps it is for this reason, among others, that her work is so well known abroad—in France through the admirable prose translation of M. Darmesteter (which one may imagine to have been literally a labour of love), in Italy through the articles of Signor Nencioni and the rhymed version of Signor Giovenale Sicca. A German translation has also appeared; those who can may read enthusiastic appreciations of her work in most of the languages of Europe. Perhaps no living English poet, after Swinburne, is nearly so well known abroad. This is partly an accident

of circumstance; it is largely a matter of instinctive response. Madame Darmesteter has always been alive to the influence of what is new and significant in foreign literature, and it is but just that her appreciation should be returned.

ARTHUR SYMONS.

A HANDFUL OF HONEYSUCKLE.

1878.

A. MARY F. DARMESTETER.

I.—A PASTORAL.

IT was Whit Sunday yesterday,
The neighbours met at church to pray;
But I remembered it was May
And went a-wandering far away.

I rested on a shady lawn,
Behind I heard green branches torn,
And through the gap there looked a Faun,
Green ivy hung from either horn.

We built ourselves a flowery house
With roof and walls of tangled boughs,
But while we sat and made carouse
The church bells drowned our songs and vows.

The light died out and left the sky,
We sighed and rose and said good-bye.
We had forgotten—He and I,
That he was dead, that I must die.

II.—DAWN-ANGELS.

ALL night I watched awake for morning,
At last the East grew all aflame,
The birds for welcome sang, or warning,
And with their singing morning came.

Along the gold-green heavens drifted
Pale wandering souls that shun the light,
Whose cloudy pinions torn and rifted,
Had beat the bars of Heaven all night.

These clustered round the moon, but higher
A troop of shining spirits went,
Who were not made of wind or fire,
But some divine dream-element.

Some held the Light, while those remaining
Shook out their harvest-coloured wings,
A faint unusual music raining,
(Whose sound was Light) on earthly things.

They sang, and as a mighty river
Their voices washed the night away,
From East to West ran one white shiver,
And waxen strong their song was Day.

III.—PARADISE FANCIES.

I.

LAST night I met mine own true love
Waking in Paradise,
A halo shone above his hair
A glory in his eyes.

We sat and sang in alleys green
And heard the angels play,
Believe me, this was true last night
Though it is false to-day.

II.

Through Paradise garden
A minstrel strays,
An old golden viol
For ever he plays.

Birds fly to his head,
Beasts lie at his feet,
For none of God's angels
Make music so sweet.

And here, far from Zion
And lonely and mute,
I listen and long
For my heart is the lute.

III.

Sing, oh the flowers of Paradise
Rose, lily and girasole !
In all the fields of Paradise
Every flower is a soul.

A climbing bindweed you are there
With petals lily fine,
Around my rose-bush fragrant-fair
Your tendrils twist and twine.

Too close those slender tendrils cling,
Their sweet embrace is Death.
But o'er my dead red roses swing,
Your lilies wreath on wreath.

IV.

On the topmost branch of the Tree of Life
There hung a ripe red apple,
The angels singing underneath
All praised its crimson dapple.

They plucked it once to play at ball,
But 'mid the shouts and laughter
The apple fell o'er Heaven's edge,
Sad angels looking after.

E'en while at ease to see it rest
Beside a peaceful chapel,
An old priest flung it farther still,
"Bah, what a battered apple!"

IV.—SONNET.

GOD sent a poet to reform His earth.
But when he came he found it cold and poor,
Harsh and unlovely, where each prosperous boor
Held poets light for all their heavenly birth,
He thought—Myself can make one better worth
The living in than this—full of old lore,
Music and light and love, where Saints adore
And Angels, all within mine own soul's girth.

But when at last he came to die, his soul
Saw Earth (flying past to Heaven) with new love,
And all the unused passion in him cried :
O God, your Heaven I know and weary of.
Give me this world to work in and make whole,
God spoke : Therein, fool, thou hast lived and died

THE CROWNED HIPPOLYTUS.

1881.

A. MARY F. DARMESTETER.

I.—TWO LOVERS.

I.

I LOVE my lover ; on the heights above me
He mocks my poor attainment with a frown.
I, looking up as he is looking down,
By his displeasure guess he still doth love me ;
For his ambitious love would ever prove me
More excellent than I as yet am shown,
So, straining for some good ungrasped, unknown,
I vainly would become his image of me.

And, reaching through the dreadful gulfs that sever
Our souls, I strive with darkness nights and days,
Till my perfected work towards him I raise,
Who laughs thereat, and scorns me more than ever ;
Yet his upbraiding is beyond all praise.
This lover that I love I call : Endeavour.

II.

I have another lover loving me,
Himself beloved of all men, fair and true.
He would not have me change although I grew
Perfect as Light, because more tenderly
He loves myself than loves what I might be.
Low at my feet he sings the winter through,
And, never won, I love to hear him woo.

For in my heaven both sun and moon is he,
To my bare life a fruitful-flooding Nile,
His voice like April airs that in our isle
Wake sap in trees that slept since autumn went.
His words are all caresses, and his smile
The relic of some Eden ravishment ;
And he that loves me so I call : Content.

II.—A JONQUIL.

IN THE PISAN CAMPO SANTO.

OUT of the place of death,
Out of the cypress shadow,
Out of sepulchral earth,
Dust that Calvary gave,
Sprang, as fragrant of breath
As any flower of the meadow,
This, with death in its birth,
Sent like speech from the grave.
So, in a world of doubt,
Love—like a flower—
Blossoms suddenly white,
Suddenly sweet and pure,
Shedding a breath about
Of new mysterious power,
Lifting a hope in the night,
Not to be told, but sure.

THE NEW ARCADIA.

1884.

* A. MARY F. DARMESTETER.

TUSCAN OLIVES.

(RISPETTI.)

THE colour of the olives who shall say ?
In winter on the yellow earth they're blue,
A wind can change the green to white or gray,
But they are olives still in every hue ;
But they are olives always, green or white,
As love is love in torment or delight ;
But they are olives, ruffled or at rest,
As love is always love in tears or jest.

We walked along the terraced olive-yard,
And talked together till we lost the way ;
We met a peasant, bent with age, and hard,
Bruising the grape-skins in a vase of clay ;
Bruising the grape-skins for the second wine.
We did not drink, and left him, Love of mine ;
Bruising the grapes already bruised enough :
He had his meagre wine, and we our love.

We climbed one morning to the sunny height,
Where chestnuts grow no more, and olives grow ;
Far-off the circling mountains, cinder-white,
The yellow river and the gorge below.
"Turn round," you said, O flower of Paradise ;
I did not turn, I looked upon your eyes.
"Turn round," you said, "turn round, look at the view !"
I did not turn, my Love, I looked at you.

How hot it was ! Across the white-hot wall
Pale olives stretch towards the blazing street ;
You broke a branch, you never spoke at all,
But gave it me to fan with in the heat ;
You gave it me without a sign or word,
And yet, my love, I think you knew I heard.
You gave it me without a word or sign :
Under the olives first I called you mine.

At Lucca, for the autumn festival,
The streets are tulip-gay ; but you and I
Forget them, seeing over church and wall
Guinigi's tower soar i' the black-blue sky,
A stem of delicate rose against the blue,
And on the top two lonely olives grew,
Crowning the tower, far from the hills, alone,
As on our risen love our lives are grown.

Who would have thought we should stand again together,
Here, with the convent a frown of towers above us ;
Here, mid the sere-wooded hills and wintry weather ;
Here, where the olives bend down and seem to love us ;
Here, where the fruit-laden olives half remember
All that began in their shadow last November ;
Here, where we knew we must part, must part and sever ;
Here where we know we shall love for aye and ever.

Reach up and pluck a branch, and give it me,
That I may hang it in my Northern room,
That I may find it there, and wake, and see
—Not you ! not you !—dead leaves and wintry gloom.
O senseless olives, wherefore should I take
Your leaves to balm a heart that can but ache ?
Why should I take you hence, that can but show
How much is left behind ? I do not know.

AN ITALIAN GARDEN.

1886.

A. MARY F. DARMESTETER.

I.—FLORENTINE MAY.

STILL, still is the Night ; still as the pause after pain;
Still and as dear ;
Deep, solemn, immense ; veiling the stars in the clear
Thrilling and luminous blue of the moon—shot
atmosphere ;
Ah, could the Night remain !

Who, truly, shall say thou art sullen or dark or
unseen,
Thou, O heavenly Night,
Clear o'er the valley of olives asleep in the quiver-
ing light,
Clear o'er the pale-red hedge of the rose, and the
lilies all white
Down at my feet in the green ?

Nay, not as the Day, thou art light, O Night. with a
beam
Far more dear and divine ;
Never the noon was blue as the tremulous heavens
of thine,
Pulsing with stars half seen, and vague in a pallid
shrine,
Vague as a dream.

Night, clear with the moon, filled with the dreamy fire
 Shining in thicket and close,
Fire from the lamp in his breast that the luminous
 fire-fly throws;
Night, full of wandering light and the song, and the
 blossoming rose,
 Night, be thou my desire!
Night, Angel of Night, hold me and cover me so—
 Open thy wings!
Ah, bend above and embrace!—till I hear in the one
 bird that sings
The throb of thy musical heart in the dusk, and the
 magical things
 Only the Night can know.

II.—*VENETIAN NOCTURNE.*

DOWN the narrow Calle where the moonlight
 cannot enter
 The houses are so high;
Silent and alone we pierced the night's dim core and
 centre—
 Only you and I.
Clear and sad our footsteps rang along the hollow
 pavement,
 Sounding like a bell;
Sounding like a voice that cries to souls in Life's
 enslavement,
 " There is Death as well ! "
Down the narrow dark we went, until a sudden
 whiteness
 Made us hold our breath;
All the white Salute towers and domes in moonlit
 brightness,—
 Ah ! could this be Death ?

III.—TUSCAN CYPRESS.

*Foir di Cipresso !
 Accenditi, Candela, in su quel masso ;
 Fa lume all'amor mio che passa adesso.
 M'affaccio alla finestra e veggo il mare,
 E mi ricordo che s'ha da morire.
 Termineranno le speranze care !*

TUSCAN STORNELLI.

RISPETTI.

I.

MY mother bore me 'neath the streaming moon,
 And all the enchanted light is in my soul.
 I have no place amid the happy noon,
 I have no shadow there nor aureole.

Ah, lonely whiteness in a clouded sky,
 You are alone, nor less alone am I ;
 Ah, moon, that makest all the roses grey,
 The roses I behold are wan as they !

II.

What good is there, Ah me ! what good in Love ?
 Since, even if you love me, we must part ;
 And since for either, an you cared enough,
 There's but division and a broken heart ?

And yet, God knows, to hear you say : My Dear !
 I would lie down and stretch me on the bier.
 And yet would I, to hear you say : My own !
 With mine own hands drag down the burial stone.

III.

I love you more than any words can say,
 And yet you do not feel I love you so ;
 And slowly I am dying day by day,—
 You look at me, and yet you do not know

You look at me and yet you do not fear :
You do not see the mourners with the bier.
You answer when I speak and wish me well,
And still you do not hear the passing bell.

IV.

O Love, O Love, come over the sea, come here,
Come back and kiss me once when I am dead !
Come back and lay a rose upon my bier,
Come, light the tapers at my feet and head.
Come back and kiss me once upon the eyes,
So I, being dead, shall dream of Paradise ;
Come kneel beside me once and say a prayer,
So shall my soul be happy anywhere.

V.

I sowed the field of Love with many seeds,
With many sails I sailed before the blast,
And all my crop is only bitter weeds ;
My sails are torn, the winds have split the mast.
All of the winds have torn my sails and shattered,
All of the winds have blown my seed and scattered,
All of the storms have burst on my endeavour,—
So let me sleep at last and sleep for ever.

VI.

I am so pale to-night, so mere a ghost,
Ah, what, to-morrow, shall my spirit be ?
No living angel of the heavenly host,
No happy soul, blithe in eternity.
Oh, I shall wander on beneath the moon,
A lonely phantom seeking for you, soon ;
A wandering ghost, seeking you timidly,
Whom you will tremble, dear, and start to see !

VII.

When I am dead and I am quite forgot,
What care I if my spirit lives or dies ?
To walk with angels in a grassy plot,
And pluck the lilies grown in Paradise ?
Ah, no—the heaven of all my heart has been
To hear your voice and catch the sighs between.
Ah, no—the better heaven I fain would give,
But in a cranny of your soul to live.

VIII.

Ah me, you well might wait a little while,
And not forget me, Sweet, until I die !
I had a home, a little distant isle,
With shadowy trees and tender misty sky.
I had a home ! It was less dear than thou,
And I forgot, as you forget me now.
I had a home, more dear than I could tell,
And I forgot, but now remember well.

IX.

Love me to-day and think not on to-morrow,
Come, take my hands, and lead me out of doors,
There in the fields let us forget our sorrow,
Talking of Venice and Ionian shores ;—
Talking of all the seas innumerable
Where we will sail and sing when I am well ;
Talking of Indian roses gold and red,
Which we will plait in wreaths—when I am dead.

X.

There is a Siren in the middle sea
Sings all day long and wreathes her pallid hair,
Seven years you sail, and seven ceaselessly,
From any port ere you adventure there.

Thither we'll go, and thither sail away
Out of the world, to hear the Siren play ;
Thither we'll go and hide among her tresses,
Since all the world is savage wildernesses.

XI.

Tell me a story, dear, that is not true,
Strange as a vision, full of splendid things ;
Here will I lie and dream it is not you,
And dream it is a mocking bird that sings.

For if I find your voice in any part,
Even the sound of it will break my heart ;
For if you speak of us and of our love,
I faint and die to feel the thrill thereof.

XII.

Let us forget we loved each other much,
Let us forget we ever have to part,
Let us forget that any look or touch
Once let in either to the other's heart.
Only we'll sit upon the daisied grass
And hear the larks and see the swallows pass ;
Only we'll live awhile, as children play,
Without to-morrow, without yesterday.

XIII.

Far, far away and in the middle sea,
So still I dream, although the dream is vain,
There lies a valley full of rest for me,
Where I shall live and you shall love again.
O ships that sail, O masts against the sky,
Will you not stop awhile in passing by ?
O prayers that hope, O faith that never knew,
Will you not take me on to heaven with you ?

XIV.

Flower of the Cypress, little bitter bloom,
You are the only blossom left to gather ;
I never prized you, grown amid the gloom,
But well you last, though all the others wither.

Flower of the Cypress, I will bind a crown
Tight round my brows to still these fancies down.
Flower of the Cypress, I will tie a wreath
Tight round my breast to kill the heart beneath.

XV.

Ah, Love, I cannot die, I cannot go
Down in the dark and leave you all alone,
Ah, hold me fast, safe in the warmth I know,
And never shut me underneath a stone.

Dead in the grave ! And I can never hear
If you are ill or if you miss me, dear.
Dead, oh my God ! and you may need me yet,
While I shall sleep, while I—while I—forget !

XVI.

Come away Sorrow, Sorrow come away—
Let us go sit in some cool, shadowy place ;
There shall you sing and hush me all the day,
While I will dream about my lover's face.

Hush me, O Sorrow, like a babe to sleep,
Then close the lids above mine eyes that weep ;
Rock me, O Sorrow, like a babe in pain,
Nor, when I slumber, wake me up again.

SONGS, BALLADS, AND A PLAY.

1888.

A. MARY F. DARMESTETER.

I.—ETRUSCAN TOMBS.

I.

TO think the face we love shall ever die,
And be the indifferent earth, and know us not!
To think that one of us shall live to cry
On one long buried in a distant spot!
O wise Etruscans, faded in the night
Yourself, with scarce a rose-leaf on your trace,
You kept the ashes of the dead in sight,
And shaped the vase to seem the vanished face.
But, O my Love, my life is such an urn
That tender memories mould with constant touch,
Until the dust and earth of it they turn
To your dear image that I love so much:
A sacred urn, filled with the sacred past,
That shall recall you while the clay shall last.

II.

These cinerary urns with human head
And human arms that dangle at their sides,
The earliest potters made them for their dead,
To keep the mother's ashes or the bride's.
O rude attempt of some long-spent despair—
With symbol and with emblem discontent—
To keep the dead alive and as they were,
The actual features and the glance that went!
The anguish of your art was not in vain,
For lo, upon these alien shelves removed
The sad immortal images remain,
And show that once they lived and once you loved.
But oh, when I am dead may none for me
Invoke so drear an immortality!

III.

Beneath the branches of the olive yard
Are roots where cyclamen and violet grow ;
Beneath the roots the earth is deep and hard,
And there a king was buried long ago.
The peasants digging deeply in the mould
Cast up the autumn soil about the place,
And saw a gleam of unexpected gold,
And underneath the earth a living face.
With sleeping lids and rosy lips he lay
Among the wreaths and gems that mark the king
One moment ; then a little dust and clay
Fell shrivelled over wreath and urn and ring.
A carven slab recalls his name and deeds,
Writ in a language no man living reads.

IV.

Here lies the tablet graven in the past,
Clear-charactered and firm and fresh of line.
See, not a word is gone ; and yet how fast
The secret no man living may divine !
What did he choose for witness in the grave ?
A record of his glory on the earth ?
The wail of friends ? The Pæans of the brave ?
The sacred promise of the second birth ?
The tombs of ancient Greeks in Sicily
Are sown with slender discs of graven gold
Filled with the praise of Death : " Thrice happy he
Wrapt in the milk-soft sleep of dreams untold ! "
They sleep their patient sleep in altered lands,
The golden promise in their fleshless hands.

II.—TUBEROSES.

I.

THE Tuberose you left me yesterday
Leans yellowing in the glass we set it in ;
It could not live when you were gone away,
Poor spike of witheringsweetness changed and thin.
And all the fragrance of the dying flower
Is grown too faint and poisoned at the source,
Like passion that survives a guilty hour,
To find its sweetness heavy with remorse.
What shall we do, my dear, with dying roses ?
Shut them in weighty tomes where none will look
—To wonder when the unfrequent page uncloses
Who shut the wither'd blossoms in the book ?—
What shall we do, my dear, with things that perish,
Memory, roses, love we feel and cherish ?

II.

Alive and white, we praised the Tuberose,
So sweet it fill'd the garden with its breath
A spike of waxy bloom that grows and grows
Until at length it blooms itself to death.
Everything dies that lives—everything dies ;
How shall we keep the flower we lov'd so long ?
O press to death the transient thing we prize,
Crush it, and shut the elixir in a song.
A song is neither live nor sweet nor white.
It hath no heavenly blossom tall and pure,
No fragrance can it breathe for our delight,
It grows not, neither lives ; it may endure.
Sweet Tuberose, adieu ! you fade too fast !
Only a dream, only a thought, can last.

III.

Who'd stay to muse if Death could never wither ?
Who dream a dream if Passion did not pass ?
But, once deceived, poor mortals hasten hither
To watch the world in Fancy's magic glass.

Truly your city, O men, hath no abiding !
Built on the sand it crumbles, as it must ;
And as you build, above your praise and chiding,
The columns fall to crush you to the dust.

But fashion'd in the mirage of a dream,
Having nor life nor sense, a bubble of nought,
The enchanted City of the Things that seem
Keeps till the end of time the eternal Thought.

Forswear to-day, forswearing joy and sorrow,
Forswear to-day, O, man, and take to-morrow.

III.—AN ORCHARD AT AVIGNON.

THE hills are white, but not with snow :
They are as pale in summer time,
For herb or grass may never grow
Upon their slopes of lime.

Within the circle of the hills
A ring, all flowering in a round,
An orchard-ring of almond fills
The plot of stony ground.

More fair than happier trees, I think,
Grown in well watered pasture land,
These parched and stunted branches, pink
Above the stones and sand.

O white, austere, ideal place,
Where very few will care to come,
Where spring hath lost the waving grace
She wears for us at home !

Fain would I sit and watch for hours
The holy whiteness of thy hills,
Their wreath of pale auroral flowers,
Their peace the silence fills.

A place of secret peace thou art,
Such peace as in an hour of pain
One moment fills the amazed heart,
And never comes again.

LYRICS.

1891.

A. MARY F. DARMESTETER.

I.—THE DEAD FRIEND.

WHEN you were alive, at least,
There were days I never met you.
In the study, at the feast,
By the hearth, I could forget you.

Moods there were of many days
When, methinks, I did not mind you.
Now, oh now, in any place
Wheresoe'er I go, I find you !

You . . . but how profoundly changed,
O you dear-belov'd dead woman !
Made mysterious and estranged,
All-pervading, superhuman.

Ah ! to meet you as of yore,
Kind, alert, and quick to laughter :
You, the friend I loved Before ;
Not this tragic friend of After.

II.—TWILIGHT.

WHEN I was young the twilight seemed too long,
How often on the western window seat
I leaned my book against the misty pane
And spelled the last enchanting lines again,
The while my mother hummed an ancient song,
Or sighed a little and said : "The hour is sweet !"
When I, rebellious, clamoured for the light.

But now I love the soft approach of night,
And now with folded hands I sit and dream
While all too fleet the hours of twilight seem ;
And thus I know that I am growing old.

O granaries of Age ! O manifold
And royal harvest of the common years !
There are in all thy treasure-house no ways
But lead by soft descent and gradual slope
To memories more exquisite than Hope.
Thine is the Iris born of olden tears,
And thrice more happy are the happy days
That live divinely in thy lingering rays.
So autumn roses bear a lovelier flower ;
So in the emerald after-sunset hour
The orchard wall and trembling aspen trees
Appear an infinite Hesperides.
Ay, as at dusk we sit with folded hands,
Who knows, who cares in what enchanted lands
We wander while the undying memories throng ?
When I was young the twilight seemed too long.

John Davidson.

1857.

MR. JOHN DAVIDSON was born at Barrhead, Renfrewshire, on the 11th of April, 1857. He was educated at the Highlanders Academy, Greenock, from whence he proceeded to Edinburgh University. His published poetry includes "Bruce": a drama (1886); "Smith": a tragedy (1888); "Scaramouch in Naxos" and other plays (1889), "In a Music-Hall" and other poems (1891), and "Fleet Street Eclogues" (1893). Of these "An Historical Pastoral" was written in 1877, "A Romantic Farce" in 1878, "Bruce" in 1884, "Smith": a tragedy, in 1886, and "Scaramouch in Naxos" in 1888.

It will be seen from this list that by far the greater part of Mr. Davidson's poetic work is in dramatic form, the form of all forms the most difficult to represent in a work like this. Probably the strongest of his dramas is that entitled "Bruce," a drama composed on a Shakespearian model, and dealing skilfully and boldly with a fine historical subject. In this the poet shows no little power in invention, associated with considerable skill, in the manipulation of historical events. The drama is swift in movement and vigorous in action, and if the blank verse is not always smooth it is rarely weak. Some of the principal characters are strongly drawn, those of Robert Bruce and of Lamberton,

Archbishop of St. Andrews, being especially successful impersonations. That some of the minor characters lack distinctiveness is doubtless true, and this perhaps applies more particularly to the women of the play. Greater differentiation would have strengthened a work so strong that one the more regrets defects. The third act shows considerable power, and had space permitted we should have quoted it entire. Our selection consists of the concluding portion of the act, in which Sir William Wallace is arraigned before Edward I. in London. That Mr. Davidson can be successful in a lighter vein is shown by "A Romantic Farce," and "Scaramouch in Naxos." "The 'Unhistorical Pastoral' is," says the *Saturday Review*, "a charming conception delicately wrought."

Although occasional songs in his dramas evidence Mr. Davidson's lyrical powers, it is his volume "In a Music-Hall" and other poems (1891) that demonstrates it. If poetry indeed be "a criticism of life" the section which gives title to the book may claim the justification that it helps to make the general body of the life criticism of poetry more complete by dealing with a phase of life not often treated in poetry. The "other poems" largely fulfil the Miltonic conditions of poetry in being "simple, sensuous, and passionate." We regret that it is impossible to give them fuller representation.

ALFRED H. MILES.

BRUCE: A DRAMA.

1884-6.

JOHN DAVIDSON.

ACT III.

(A SELECTION.)

SCENE—Westminster: *The Hall of the Palace.* KING EDWARD *on a Throne of State.* In attendance, lords, gentlemen, and officers. SIR PETER MALORIE, *with* SIR WILLIAM WALLACE, *bound and guarded.*

Edward I. The witnesses, Sir Peter Mallorie.

Mallorie. Sire,

Hugh Beaumont is the first. He'll testify
Of early deeds in the arch-traitor's life.
He is an old man now and garrulous :
A gentleman withal, whose gentle blood
Stood him in little stead, when windy youth
Had sown itself, and whirling poverty
Down to the barren common dashed his head.
So with his sword he batted as he might,
And valour was his star. Let him have scope,
For he has much to say. [*HUGH BEAUMONT is led in.*
Inform the king

As strictly as to God of all that passed
Between you and the prisoner.

Edward I. Speak the truth.

Beaumont. Your gracious majesty, what I can tell
Is liker fable ; but the noble knight,
The prisoner, will acknowledge all I say :
Much of it honours him.—To Ayr he came
One day, disguised, with hat down, cloak pulled up.
There as he paced the street, Lord Percy's man
Seized on some fish a burgher just had bought ;
Whereat, Sir William, like a smouldering fire,
Flared up to burn the foot whose thoughtless kick

Had tortured it to flame. In speechless rage
He grasped the caitiff's throat and smote him dead.
About two score well harnessed Englishmen,
With whom I was, did straight environ him.
Against a wall he bore which seemed to be
Rather upheld by him than him upholding,
And reaped us down like corn. He did, my lords.
He multiplied his strokes so that he seemed
To multiply himself; there did appear
Opposed to every soldier there, a Wallace.
Without or helm or mail, in summer-weed,
Grass-green, flowered red with blood, he fought us all,
Till one that bit the dust writhed near enough
To pierce him in the leg and then he fell.
Yet even so he might have won away;
But as he rose he fetched a blow at me,
Which I eluding, down his breaking brand
Upon the causeway struck; and in his eyes
A light went out, when his uplifted hand
Showed but the hilt. In faith I pitied him.
I pitied him, and bore him to the tower.
There in a filthy dungeon he expired
Of festering wounds and food that swine refused,
Ere they had settled what death was his due.

Edward I. But he is here alive?

Beaumont. Pardon, dread lord;
He seemed at that time dead: the West mourned for him:
His aged nurse bought his corrupting corpse
To bury it decently in hallowed ground.—
Well, after that a while, in Lanark-town,
I waited in the High Street on the judge,
Lord Ormesby, then on circuit in the west.
Four men were with me. One, on fire with wine,
A braggart at the best, vaunted his deeds.

And when two men came down the street, he cried,
"See yonder stalks a canny muffled Scot,
A strapper, by this light! attended, too!
He's like to have that may be taxable.
Something I'll mulct him of; or something give,
That shall be worse than nothing, namely blows!"
"Belike," said I, "that boon will not go quit.
His side is guarded by a lengthy purse,
Whose bright contents, I think, he will not hoard."
"I'll have his sword," quoth he, "If he refuse,
Take it, and beat him with it, till he shake
His dastard body out of his habergeon;
Which, leaving here, he'll give me hearty thanks,
That I leave him his skin, the lousy Scot!"
And so he staggered out to meet the two.
The muffled stranger whispered to his man,
And he sped on before in anxious haste,
Dodging the drunk man's outstretched arm,
Who said, "Well, you may go; your master is behind."
And when the master came he stopped him, saying,
"Knave Scot, unveil! Come, show your sonsy face.
Vile thief, where did you steal this tabard green?
And where the devil got you this fair knife?
What! jewelled in the hilt! Unbuckle, quick,
Mantle and whittle; and to make amends
For having ever worn them clasp them both
About me, and you shall have leave to go."
"St. Andrew! There's my whittle, English dog!"
And with a thrust the Scot let out his life.
We others rushed upon him instantly,
Shouting, "Down with him! Vengeance on the Scot!"
He gave us back, "St. Andrew, and the right!"
Wrapping his arm in what had wrapped his face,
And looking like the lion that he was.

Beholding him I trembled, and stood still ;
But one more rash ran on, to shriek and fall,
His raised right arm lopped at the shoulder off.
With that a voice cried, "In the king's name, peace!"
The Scot looked up and saw a troop approach.
"Too great a pack for one," he said, and ran.
Now this was Ormesby, the justiciary,
Arrived in Lanark to dispense the law,
With Hazelrig, the ruler of the shire.

Mallorie. (aside to BEAUMONT.) Quick man! be quick!
Look how his highness chafes!

Beaumont. The valiant Scot was Wallace. It appeared
His foster-mother, who had paid away
The earnings of her lifetime for his corpse,
Kissing, and weeping o'er it, saw a spark
Struggle with night of death; or else her hope
Inspired new breath, much aided by her prayers.
The little glow she nursed into a flame,
So feeble, that, lest meat should smother it,
Her daughter gave one of her bosom's springs,
Then at high-tide to feed her new-born babe,
For the replenishing his body's lamp.
Being recovered, he had come to see
His wife, who dwelt in Lanark.

Wallace (aside). God! O God!

Beaumont. Hazelrig led the chase. I followed close.
We reached the house. I searched the garden. There,
Scarcely concealed, I saw the prisoner. Sire,
I'm not a coward, and I was not then;
But from the instant that I recognised
The dead man come alive, enchantment caught
My spirit in a toil, and made me watch
Powerless and voiceless, all he did. I felt
No movement, even while I followed him.

There was some witchery I do believe.
In by the window when the search was o'er,
He entered, saying gaily to his wife,
"I almost think an English louredane saw me.
How thin a thicket hides a dread discovery!"
Then seeing on the floor his lady lie,
"O God! what varied truth was in that word!
Not dead, my love!" She spoke that I could hear.
"Dying, dying. Hazelrig has killed me
My spirit clings still to my lips to kiss you.
I would my soul might melt into a kiss
To lie on your lips till your soul's release,
And then to heaven together we would fly.
Avenge my death and Scotland's wrongs." "My Love!"
He cried; and all his strength was water.
And long he held her: and he shook and sobbed.

Wallace (straining his bonds). Nay, hang me!—
burn me!—I am sawn asunder!

Beaumont. At length he put her softly on a seat,
And took her hand, and knelt: and she was dead.
Her face was like an angel's fallen asleep.
Upon her bloody breast his eyes he fixed,
Seeming unruffled as a still white flame,
And words, more dread than silence, spake aloud.
"I will avenge thy death and Scotland's wrongs.
For every tear that now my eyes have dropped
From English veins shall seas of blood be shed.
Each sigh of mine shall have ten thousand echoes:
Yea, for her death, I'll England sepulchre.
O, glutton grave, a surfeit shall be thine!
Death's self shall sleep before my vengeance flags."
Slowly retiring with his face to her
He went. I have not seen him since till now.
He was a young man then. [Voices within.]

Edward I. What noise is that ?

Clifford. A messenger, my lord, would force the door.

Edward I. Whence comes he ?

Clifford. From the north, your majesty.

Edward I. Admit him. [Enter Messenger.

 Welcome, sir. Your news at once,
Plainly and nakedly.

Messenger. Comyn is dead :
Slain in Dumfries by Bruce ; whose party then,
Led by the fiery Edward, mad as he,
Attacked and seized the castle. On the day
I left the north, in Scone, the Lady Buchan,
The Bruce's paramour, Fife's sister, crowned
Her murderous lover king. Some lords and knights
Have gathered round him, and he lies at Perth.

Edward I. Besotted fool ! But it is well. Herein
I see God's hand hardening the heart of Bruce
Against me, who am but God's minister,
That I may cut him off. I give God thanks.
Wallace—What ! has he swooned ?

Mallorie. He's in a trance.
Wallace !—Well, this is strange !—Wallace !

Wallace (starting). My lords !

Edward I. We'll countenance this mockery no more.
All England and all Scotland—all the world
Prejudge your fate. Wherefore we will not then
Waste time in tedious processes of law
To find you, as we know you, dyed in guilt,
And leave another to pursue unchecked
A course of similar iniquity.
You for your treason are condemned to die
The death that traitors merit. Lead him hence.
Come after me, my lords, immediately,
And take your charges for the north.

[EDWARD I. goes. WALLACE is led away.

IN A MUSIC-HALL AND OTHER POEMS.

1891.

JOHN DAVIDSON.

I.—FOR LOVERS.

(A SELECTION.)

ALONG the brown, crisp, withered woodland way
Bestrewn with greenest moss and maiden-hair,
That like an aisle's thick matting winding lay
Between the trees that pillar the blue air,
Hand clasped in hand and voice attuned to voice,
Chanting in borrowed words our own true love
With such divine, enraptured, Sapphic noise
As stills to listen blackbird, merle, and dove,
And with a tread heart-lightened to such ease
As would have added grace to Dian's bearing,
With eyes that lighten, locks free to the breeze,
Two waves of love, full-breasted, onward faring,
Through all the wood and swift across the lea
We hurry downward to the happy sea,
And cast ourselves on ocean's boundless stream,
Even as we have been flung into time's dream.
We lie and listen to the hissing waves,
Wherein our boat seems sharpening its keel,
Which on the sea's face all unthankful graves
An arrowed scratch as with a tool of steel.
We gaze right up into the simple blue,
We watch the wheeling, diving, sailing mew.
Oh then, we think if ever on our love
Vulture calamity shall flap his wing,
We will not wait until we have been hove
Half-eaten to despair, that wolfish thing ;

But while our eyes are yet undimmed with tears,
And ere hope's ague has become quotidian,
We will forestall despair and blighting fears,
Sheltering in death our love's unstooped meridian :
For in our boat even at the sun's noon,
Like two discoverers we will straight embark,
And sail within his shadow, that bright boon,
A voyage parallel to his great arc,
And then in his red, western winding-sheet
Sink down with him to death's rest, deep and sweet.

Then in our naked godhood hand in hand
Into the joyous element we spring :
So light we are, thereon we almost stand,
But the sea clings us like a living thing.
And you are lovely swimming in the sea,
And like a creature born and bred therein ;
But never did a thing so fair and free
Inhabit there, nor ever shall, I ween.
I bear you on my back a little way ;
For meed you sing an ocean melody,
So sweetly in the splendour of the day
That all the rippling waves move silently ;
And round about the air intensely listens,
And from his pride an eagle stoops to hear,
The sun your face with all his wonder glistens
And earth stands still ; eternity is near ;
Amazèd eyes of fish through ocean's wrinkles
Peer out like scattered stars in noon of night ;
Nor air, nor bird breathes note, no wavelet tinkles ;
All Nature is death-still to hear aright.

II.—NO MAN'S LAND.

(CONCLUDING STANZAS.)

SHE took me to a curtained cave,
Where lamps, like moonlight, white and still,
Shed perfumed lustre. The bright wave
That furthest dares when great thoughts fill
The ocean's heart of love, and spill
In swelling tides, stole up and laid
One kiss upon the cavern's sill,
Then shrank away as if afraid.
At moments music, soft and rich,
From hidden minstrels came in gusts ;
Anon the rainbow-crested witch
Sang piercing songs of loves and lusts ;
And once she spake : " Behold, where rusts
The armour of an elfin knight !
Behold ! with thrice three deadly thrusts
I killed him : he defied my might."
Night sank : the moon hung o'er the wave,
But such a radiant flood was thrown
Across the waters from the cave,
The moon was like a ghost—her own ;
No palest star beside her shone ;
And pageants through that bright sea-room
Whose heaven-high walls were night, swept on
From gloom to glare, from glare to gloom.
I saw the ocean fairies float ;
And Venus and her island passed ;
I saw Ulysses in his boat—
His struggles bent the seasoned mast.
I, too, prayed madly to be cast
Among the waves, when close in-shore
The Syrens, singing, came at last ;
But the witch wove her spell once more.

I saw a ship become a wrack ;
 Charybdis laughed, and Scylla bayed ;
Arion on the dolphin's back
 By Nereids courted, sang and played ;
 And Proteus like a phantom strayed ;
Old Neptune passed with locks of white ;
 When Dian came, the heavenly maid,
I saw the moon had vanished quite.

Then voices rose and trumpets rolled ;
 And broidered, silken sails appeared,
And crowded decks, and masts of gold,
 And heavy, blazoned banners reared—
 The burning eye, the swarthy beard,
The glittering arms with gems inlaid,
 The starry swords the Paynim feared,
The glory of the first crusade.

Straight came a storm ; from thunder-clouds
 The golden lightning streamed and flashed,
And fired the twisted, silken shrouds,
 And gilt the foam ; the thunder crashed,
 And rain like arrows stung and lashed
The pallid knights, whose armour rang ;
 Ship smote on straining ship and thrashed
The waves, and shrill the wild wind sang.

Then suddenly the sun arose,
 And from her cave she made me pack,
That wanton witch, with gibes and blows.
 I prayed her to be taken back
 And see more visions, when—alack !—
Fast rooted in the grinding strand
 I found myself, the human wrack,
The ghastly verge of No Man's Land.

Alfred Hayes.

1857.

ALFRED HAYES was born at Wolverhampton on the 7th of August, 1857. He was educated at Wolverhampton Grammar School and King Edward's School, Birmingham, where he obtained a prize for English verse, the subject being "Charles Kingsley." He entered New College, Oxford, with a classical exhibition in 1876, and took his degree in classical honours four years later. After a short residence in London, where he studied for the Bar, he abandoned the pursuit of law, and held successive masterships at Felstead School in Essex, Brewood School in Staffordshire, and King Edward's School in Birmingham. In 1889 he was elected Secretary of the Birmingham and Midland Institute; he has also acted for some years as Secretary of the Birmingham Municipal Technical School, and as Special Local Secretary for superintending the Government Science and Art Examinations in the Birmingham district. His musical tastes have led him to take a special interest in the development of the School of Music, which forms one of the principal departments of the Midland Institute.

His first published work, "The Last Crusade and Other Poems," was issued in 1886. The poem is a trilogy in blank verse, descriptive of the ill-fated expedition to Tunis, the death of St. Louis in the

plague-stricken camp, and the conveyance of his body across the Alps to its burial at St. Denis, concluding with the storming of Nazareth by Edward I. of England—the final act of the Crusades, and one of the most dramatic in all history. In the following year Mr. Hayes published a narrative poem in blank verse, entitled “David Westren,” which, like its predecessor, rapidly reached a second edition. This poem is the life-story of a country parson, and abounds in descriptions of the romantic scenery of Dartmoor. “The March of Man and Other Poems” was published in 1891, and a second edition was issued in the following year. “The March of Man” is a blank-verse poem in two parts, celebrating the progress of humanity, through error and conflict, from moral chaos and darkness to the order of peaceful righteousness. In 1893 Mr. Hayes co-operated with two other poets of the younger generation, Mr. Norman Gale and Mr. Richard le Gallienne, in the publication of “A Fellowship in Song.” Mr. Hayes’s portion consists entirely of lyrics, chiefly descriptive of the quiet scenery of South Warwickshire, “The Vale of Arden” being especially imbued with the restful spirit of the midland meadows.

Among a crowd of young poets who are content to express themselves in brief idylls, elegiac meditations, or swallow-flights of song, Mr. Hayes is almost alone—at the most he has but two or three companions—in choosing themes of arresting objective interest and almost epical amplitude. To make such a choice is bravely to dare, for it brings a neophyte into direct competition with the masters who have risen to the height of some great argu-

ment, and whose large utterance has added dignity to some commanding theme. "David Westren" is, indeed, simply an expanded idyll, dealing after Lord Tennyson's graceful manner with the homely beauty or pathos of familiar contemporary life; but "The Last Crusade" and "The March of Man" are devoted to traditions of heroic action, and to great endurances, struggles, and achievements of the human spirit which might have provided the mightiest poets with a fitting inspiration. In speaking of such attempts it would be praise simply to say that Mr. Hayes had not conspicuously failed—that he had not proved himself obnoxious to the charge of recklessly self-sufficient temerity. It is much higher praise to say—what can be quite justly said—that he has largely succeeded; and though his success is not of that supreme kind which vanquishes by greatness, it is certainly a success which gratifies and charms by a dignified and winning adequacy of accomplishment. "The Last Crusade" is, as a whole, Mr. Hayes's finest work. The theme of "The March of Man" is almost too large to be satisfyingly compassed even by a poet of Shakespearian grasp, and though it abounds in noble passages, some of which touch the high-water mark of the writer's performance, the poem in its entirety leaves a certain feeling of diffuseness: the parts are greater than the whole. Still, it is rich in happy illuminating phrase,—

"Forward through law to righteous lawlessness";

in fresh suggestive imagery such as that in which man is the oak-tree, thriving

♥
"by the rotten mould
Of its own leaves that falling feed its strength";

in that fine rhetoric which is not mere sonorous fluency but the native eloquence of imaginative passion. "The March of Man" consists for the most part of rapid effective chronicle and impassioned reflection: "The Last Crusade," and in a less degree "David Westren" testify to Mr. Hayes's command of a rich and vivid pictorialism. The passages devoted to the plague in "The Death of St. Louis" and the scene of rapine in "The Storming of Nazareth" are full of horror, but Mr. Hayes eschews the pursuit of the horrible as a mere literary effect; his handling has restraint, sobriety, dignity; and his favoured motives are evidently those which have the charm not of mere emotional impressiveness but of physical and moral beauty. The blank verse which Mr. Hayes has chosen as the metrical vehicle of his three most important poems is flowing, sonorous, responsive to its burden, and free from monotony of cadence—it is in short the work of a metrist; its sole defect being a too unbroken uniformity of stateliness. A few of those declensions into homely familiarities of diction which Lord Tennyson could utilise so well would have increased the effect of the ornate passages. Of Mr. Hayes's few lyrics much need not be said. Most of them have real beauty, and none fails to please, but they lack the impulse and fire of the longer poems; and indeed, the poet's imaginative vitality is made manifest by the fact that he is at his best when inspired not by a mere personal mood but by some larger theme of universal interest.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

THE MARCH OF MAN AND OTHER POEMS.

1892.

ALFRED HAYES.

I.—THE MARCH OF MAN.

(SELECTED PASSAGES.)

I.

BLIND—then a little light—and once more blind.
Blind in birth's living shroud, there blindly reared,
Thence blindly driven—and lo! a drowsy babe,
Its red face wrinkled like a fresh-blown poppy,
Whose silken petals keep awhile the crease
Of every fold they slept in. Day by day
The light grows friendlier, till the strange great eyes,
So vastly vacant, so profoundly grave,
Stare hopeless, fearless, loveless at the world.
Then dawn of soul and day of strength, then dusk
Of fading dreams—a sigh—and once more blind.

II.

Sound an alarm! for many a waking soul
Listens, while comfortable captains drone:—
“Loud fools, that think to fashion gods of clay,
Let be! ye vex yourselves in vain: the dawn
Asks not your aid; ye cannot stay its course
Nor hasten it one hour.”—Regard them not;
Prophets of ease, ambassadors of sloth,
Seducers of the soldiery of Heaven!
They spake not thus, whose voices echo yet
Across oblivion's widening domain,
Those mighty marshals of the wars of old.
Man's spacious evolutions on this world's
Dim battlefield, where night contends with day,

Spare not a soldier ; each one doth his part
To make or mar the triumph, and he thwarts
Who helps not. None can watch the shifting lines,
The headlong rout, the struggling hero-band,
The heights now gained, now lost, 'mid curse and
prayer,

Wail of the wounded, silence of the slain,
Himself unmoved, save Him who moveth all.
Love's kingdom is not won by watching ; Heaven
Is slowly scaled by toil and tears and blood ;
The bonds that man hath woven man must rend,
The wrongs that man hath suffered man must right,
The hopes that man hath wrecked man must restore,
Man's nobler order man himself must found.

What though in bygone æons some vast Power,
We darkly name by the great name of God,
Scattered the seed of systems through the void,
Spake to them, " Thus and thus ye shall unfold,"
And left them self-sufficient but foredoomed
To one fixed course ?—the destinies of man
Revolve not as the planets round the sun,
Move not to music of some distant sphere,
But answer man's own impulse, and are ruled
By human passion, pity, faith and love.

The goal we cannot choose but reach, is seen
By human hope and sought by human strength ;
The laws we cannot choose but own, are writ
In human hearts, proclaimed by human wills ;
Fate's active servants, not her passive slaves.
What though, engendered in Time's secret womb,
The germ of all that man shall ever be
Was quickened by the Maker and ordained
To see the light with labour and with groans ?—
Yet knowledge can assuage the pangs, and skill

Hasten the joyful birth. What though the world
Untimely suffer many a spasm which fails
And brings forth nought but sorrow?—every throe
Hath yet its purpose, and unknown prepares
The agony which yields the newborn life.

III

Not darkness only hinders ; Truth's worst foes
Bask in full sunshine—Indolence, that lies
With nerveless limbs and half-closed lids, and gapes
At the blue main above him, where the clouds
Set their white sails and chase their snowy sisters,
Majestically slow ; Pride, with firm foot
That pauseth where his shallow eyes may greet
His image in the stagnant pool ; old Custom,
That grazeth without pause in sheltered croft
Where grass is deep, and with a paunch well filled
Settles his heavy bones, and hour by hour
Cheweth the cud untroubled ; Jealousy,
Lean-cheeked, slant-eyed, whose hunger grows
 more fierce
By feeding ; Lust, with trembling hand, that clutches
The crystal cup wherein the wine of life
Sparkles, and breaks the cup, and wastes the wine ;
Greed, whose small eyes survey his bloated form
And rest content—such are the foes of Truth.

IV.

 The levin's rage is tamed
To light our midnight musings and give back
Forgotten accents of the mouldered dead ;
The sun is made our limner, and the stars
Reveal their unseen splendours unto eyes
By man contrived, that see where man is blind.

We watch the shapeless embryos of systems
Fashion themselves in the vast womb of space,
We see the gnat's heart beat, and 'neath our lens
The water-drop becomes a peopled realm.
The loom whereon the weaver slowly wrought
His simple web has grown a living thing ;
We give the word, and lo ! the shuttle flies
Unerring, while deft fingers of bright steel
Catch at the threads and weave a damask sheen
Subtler than winter's handiwork.

II.—TO SWEET SEVENTEEN.

TO thee, young queen, these tribute lines
Charged with my love—the word is writ ;
A daintier word were false ; but “love”
No more can tell the soul of it,

Than “light” can tell the myriad mood
Of sunshine ; from the fickle play
Which frolics through the dappled leaves
When all the lanes are white with May,

To that full bliss of warmth which lies
Delirious on the breast of June,
Or sunset flash of burdened heavens,
Or dreamy glow of autumn noon.

So “love”—poor word—is all we have,
To paint each radiant power that makes
The sunshine of a human heart ;
From the sweet sense of want which wakes

In childhood's breast, to ripe repose
Of wedded faith, or ecstasy
Of passionate youth, or such delight
As that I take, fair girl, in thee.

A FELLOWSHIP OF SONG.

1893.

ALFRED HAYES, NORMAN GALE, AND RICHARD LE
GALLIENNE.

ALFRED HAYES.

I.—CONSERVATION.

THOU, who from many a spray forlorn
Its ruddy jewellery hast torn,
Belovèd thrush!
From mountain-ash no need to fly,
At sight of me, to sanctuary
Of laurel-bush.

Plunder thy fill!—my garden yet
Is sweet with stock and mignonette,
With asters gay,
And of its plenty well can spare,
O prince of song, the frugal fare
It doth purvey.

Soon will the dahlia's pride lie dead,
The sunflower droop his kingly head,
And pinched with cold
The lordly hollyhock repine
For still September's mild sunshine
And moon of gold.

Then Winter, with her wailful rains,
Will weep o'er Autumn's gaunt remains,
Or watch them lie
Stark in the snow's sepulchral dress
Entombed within a featureless
Gray vault of sky.

But when I sigh, dear mottled thief,
For crocus-flower and lilac-leaf
 Delaying long,
The vanished splendour of the tree
Will glow again, conserved by thee,
 In glorious song.

II.—THE SILENT HARP.

POOR harp, how desolate !—The loving hand,
That wind-like wandered o'er thy tremulous strings,
Culling sweet sheaves of sound or whisperings
Æolian, at the Master's mute command
Drops lifeless. In that unresponsive land
What music He from earthly sufferings
Evoketh and the stress of mortal things,
Wistful we seek but may not understand.
Yonder may dwell continual peace, but here
All peace begetteth and is born of strife,
And every smile is sister to a tear ;
Death only can the missing note supply
To quite resolve the discord of this life
Silence alone is perfect harmony.

Constance C. W. Naden.

1858—1889.

THE life of Constance Caroline Woodhill Naden was one of incessant self-culture, with enough of achievement to show that no culture could be excessive for so richly and variously endowed a mind. Born at Edgbaston, on 24th January, 1858, dying in London, 23rd December, 1889, she had evinced remarkable powers in poetry, in philosophy, and in science, and accumulated knowledge which, by the unanimous testimony of those best enabled to judge was no less remarkable for solid thoroughness than for facility of acquirement or the brilliancy of display. By the same testimony she afforded a still rarer instance of a nature unspoiled by success and admiration; entirely exempt from vanity and pedantry; as simple, tender, and playful at the last as at the first. This high praise seems borne out by the internal evidence of her poetical writings, whose main title to remembrance is the strong personal interest which they inspire. They are remarkable as compositions, both for correctness of form and eloquence of diction; yet their chief interest is not their ability but their inability to express the strong spirit behind them. This is the more remarkable as they are much less subjective than is usually the case with the productions of young poetesses, and contain much less of merely personal sentiment; while some of the best pieces

belong to a department little cultivated by female votaries of the Muse—the humorous. This preference for ideal characters and imaginary situations bespeaks a creative power which might have achieved something memorable but for the authoress's digression into the realms of abstract thinking, and in particular her adoption of a system of hyper-idealism which must ultimately destroy the capacity for poetical creation by resolving existence into mere illusion. Her views and aspirations might again have altered ; so far as can be judged, however, her work in poetry was accomplished ; its net result, two volumes, more interesting as revelations of a noble nature than as poetical inspirations, yet poetry beyond a doubt, neither mechanical nor imitative. She published two volumes of verse, "Songs and Sonnets of Springtime" (1881), and "The Modern Apostle and Other Poems" (1887). Her most finished writing is in her longer poems, "A Modern Apostle," "The Elixir of Life," "The Story of Clarice," which are not well adapted for extract ; but the three pieces, "The Pantheist's Song of Immortality," "Friendship," and "Natural Selection," express the three leading characteristics of her nature as illustrated by her verse—intellectual rapture, devoted affection, and gay fanciful humour.

RICHARD GARNETT.

POEMS.

CONSTANCE C. W. NADEN.

I.—THE PANTHEIST'S SONG OF IMMORTALITY.

BRING snow-white lilies, pallid heart-flushed roses,
Enwreathe her brow with heavy scented flowers ;
In soft undreaming sleep her head reposes,
While, unregretted, pass the sunlit hours.

Few sorrows did she know—and all are over ;
A thousand joys—but they are all forgot :
Her life was one fair dream of friend and lover ;
And were they false—ah, well, she knows it not.

Look in her face, and lose thy dread of dying ;
Weep not, that rest will come, that toil will cease :
Is it not well, to lie as she is lying,
In utter silence, and in perfect peace ?

Canst thou repine, that sentient days are numbered ?
Death is unconscious Life, that waits for birth :
So didst thou live, while yet thine embryo slumbered,
Senseless, unbreathing, e'en as heaven and earth.

Then shrink no more from Death, though Life be gladness,
Nor seek him, restless in thy lonely pain :
The law of joy ordains each hour of sadness,
And firm or frail, thou canst not live in vain.

What though thy name by no sad lips be spoken,
And no fond heart shall keep thy memory green ?
Thou yet shalt leave thine own enduring token,
For earth is not as though thou ne'er hadst been.

See yon broad current, hasting to the ocean,
Its ripples glorious in the western red :
Each wavelet passes, trackless ; yet its motion
Has changed for evermore the river bed.

Ah, wherefore weep, although the form and fashion
Of what thou seemest, fades like sunset flame ?
The uncreated Source of toil and passion,
Through everlasting change abides the same.

Yes, thou shalt die : but these almighty forces,
That meet to form thee, live for evermore :
They hold the suns in their eternal courses,
And shape the tiny sand-grains on the shore.

Be calmly glad, thine own true kindred seeing
In fire and storm, in flowers with dew impearled ;
Rejoice in thine imperishable being,
One with the essence of the boundless world.

II.—THE CONFESSION.

OH, listen, for my soul can bear no more ;
I crave not pardon ; that I cannot win :
Yet hear me, Father, for I must outpour
My tale of deadly sin.

This night I passed through dim and loathsome lairs,
Where dwell foul wretches, that I feared to see :
Yet would to God my lot were such as theirs !
They have not sinned like me.

And then I saw that lovely girl who stood
Here, where I stand, some venial fault to show :
I was as fair, as innocently good,
One long, long year ago.

High thoughts were mine, and yearnings to endure
Some noble grief, and conquer heaven by pain :
Alas, I was a child ; my prayers were pure,
Yet were they all in vain.

Love came and stirred my breast ; nor fierce or vile,
But springing stainless, like some mountain stream ;
And I was happy for a little while,
And lived as in a dream.

Thou art a priest, and dwellest far apart ;
In vain I speak of joys thou hast not known :
Even to *him* I scarce could show my heart,
Although it was his own.

Nay, look not in my face ! One night he came,
And I sprang forward, giddy with delight :
Father ! His blood-stained hands ! His eyes aflame !
His features deadly white !

Ah, wherefore ask me more ? Some hated foe—
But 'tis a common tale—thou knowest all :
A word, a gesture ; then a sudden blow ;
And then—a dead man's fall.

Dumbly I heard, and could not weep or sigh ;
Gone was all power of motion, e'en of breath ;
But from my heart rose up one silent cry,
My first wild prayer for death.

"Farewell," he said, "farewell ! Yet bury deep
My bloody secret, that it shall not rise ;
Or it will track and slay me, though I sleep
Nameless, 'neath foreign skies."

Such boon he craved of me, his promised wife :
Earth's hope, heaven's joy, for him I lost the whole :
Some give but love, and some have given life,
But *I* gave up my soul.

"Embrace me not," I said. But ere he went
One long impassioned kiss he gave me yet :
Still, still we loved—oh, Father, I repent—
Would God I could forget !

Ah, not to fiery love would Christ deny

The gift of mercy that I cannot seek :
Father, a guiltless man was doomed to die,
And yet I did not speak.

Mine was the sin ; for me it was he died,
Slain for the murder that my Love had wrought :
How blest was he, when Death's gate opened wide,
And heaven appeared unsought !

But I, who dared not seek the Virgin's shrine,
Whose very faith was madness and despair,
Lived lonely, exiled far from Love Divine,
From peace, from hope, from prayer.

None dreamt that I consumed with secret fire,
Nor knew the sin that withered up my youth :
I wasted with a passionate desire
Only to tell the truth.

But now they say that he I love is dead ;
Calmly I listen ; see, my cheeks are dry ;
My heart is palsied, all my tears are shed ;
And yet I would not die.

Let me do penances to save his soul,
And pray thy God to lay the guilt on me ;
Strong is my spirit ; I can bear the whole,
If that will set him free.

For could my expiating woe and shame
Raise him to Paradise, with Christ to dwell,
Then were there joy in purgatorial flame—
Nay, there were Heaven in Hell.

And then, perchance, when countless years are past,
Ages of torment in some fiery sea,
The grace of God may reach to me at last ;
Yes, even unto me.

III.—FRIENDSHIP.

THE human soul that crieth at thy gates,
Of man or woman, alien or akin,
'Tis thine own Self that for admission waits—
Rise, let it in.

Bid not thy guest but sojourn and depart,
Keep him, if so it may be, till the end,
If thou have strength and purity of heart
To be his friend.

Not only, at bright morn, to wake his mind
With noble thoughts, and send him forth with song,
Nor only, when night falls, his wounds to bind ;
But all day long

To help with love, with labour, and with lore,
To triumph when, by others' aid, he wins,
To carry all his sorrows, and yet more—
To bear his sins ;

To keep a second conscience in thine own,
Which suffers wound on wound, yet strongly lives,
Which takes no bribe of tender look or tone,
And yet forgives.

But, should some mortal vileness blast with death
Thy love for comrade, leader, kinsman, wife—
Seek no elixir to restore false breath,
And loathsome life.

Thy love is slain—thou canst not make it whole
With all thy store of wine, and oil, and bread :
Some passions are but flesh—thine had a soul,
And that is dead.

IV.—NATURAL SELECTION.

I HAD found out a gift for my fair,
I had found where the cave men were laid :
Skulls, femur and pelvis were there,
And spears that of silex they made.
But he ne'er could be true, she averred,
Who would dig up an ancestor's grave—
And I loved her the more when I heard
Such foolish regard for the cave.
My shelves they are furnished with stones,
All sorted and labelled with care ;
And a splendid collection of bones,
Each one of them ancient and rare ;
One would think she might like to retire
To my study—she calls it a “ hole ” !
Not a fossil I heard her admire
But I begged it, or borrowed, or stole.
But there comes an idealess lad,
With a strut and a stare and a smirk ;
And I watch, scientific, though sad,
The Law of Selection at work.
Of Science he had not a trace,
He seeks not the How and the Why,
But he sings with an amateur's grace,
And he dances much better than I.
And we know the more dandified males
By dance and by song win their wives—
'Tis a law that with *avis* prevails,
And ever in *Homo* survives.
Shall I rage as they whirl in the valse ?
Shall I sneer as they carol and coo ?
Ah no ! for since Chloe is false
I'm certain that Darwin is true.

Edith (Nesbit) Bland.

1858.

MRS. BLAND, who is better known to the public under her maiden signature of E. Nesbit, was born in 1858. She began to write verses as early as 1870, when she had not yet completed her twelfth year. Her first published poems appeared in the *Sunday Magazine* and *Good Words*. She has published "Lays and Legends" (1886), and "Leaves of Life" (1888), besides some bright and successful children's books, essays, and stories, as well as poems, and has contributed largely to the *Argosy* and *Longman's Magazine*. In 1879 she married Mr. Bland, and has several children; and, as indicating her sympathies in certain directions, one of them is named Fabian, after the Fabian Society.

Mrs. Bland has a sweet lyrical note, and a keen sense of the pain and sorrow involved in the modern strain and stress of improvement, so-called progress, and enlightenment. The mechanical tendency of the time, which to such a degree represses free and happy expression of individuality, and the wrongs that flow from a constitution of society which so separates the various classes that they are without a common interest, or fail to recognise its existence, have deeply impressed her, and the sense of this colours much of her more serious verse. In one

or two of her poems there is a note of protest against certain forms of social inequality which is almost socialistic. If this were more obtaining, it might operate disadvantageously. But she seldom fails to communicate some fresh touch, or to find some new image which elevates and imparts relief. And she delights to escape often into a freer sphere, and is then very apt at giving voice to many of the indefinite yearnings of womanhood towards higher ideals, a fuller development, a wider sphere. She has, too, a touch of humour, and a liking for dramatic mediums, and can occasionally condescend to something approaching to the vivacity of society verse.

Her "Baby" poems are very sweet, and her treatment of the subject of love, true, sincere and strong. Much of her best work is in her longer poems, which space forbids us to quote; but the few short poems which we are able to give will doubtless excite a desire on the part of readers unfamiliar with her work to make a larger acquaintance with

ALEX. H. JAPP.

LAYS AND LEGENDS.

1886.

EDITH (NESBIT) BLAND.

I.—SONG.

(FROM "THE MOAT-HOUSE.")

O H, baby, baby, baby dear,
We lie alone together here ;
The snowy gown and cap and sheet
With lavender are fresh and sweet ;
Through half-closed blinds the roses peer
To see and love you, baby dear.

We are so tired, we like to lie
Just doing nothing, you and I,
Within the darkened quiet room.
The sun sends dusk rays through the gloom,
Which is no gloom since you are here,
My little life, my baby dear.

Soft sleepy mouth so vaguely pressed
Against your new-made mother's breast,
Soft little hands in mine I fold,
Soft little feet I kiss and hold,
Round soft smooth head and tiny ear,
All mine, my own, my baby dear.

And he we love is far away !
But he will come some happy day.
You need but me, and I can rest
At peace with you beside me pressed.
There are no questions, longings vain,
No murmuring, nor doubt, nor pain,
Only content and we are here,
My baby dear.

II.—THE DEPTHS OF THE SEA.

(FOR A PICTURE BY E. BURNE JONES.)

I.

Habes tota quod mente petisti

Infelix.

IN deep vague spaces of the lonely sea
She deemed her soulless life was almost fair,
Yet ever dreamed that in the upper air
Lay happiness—supreme in mystery ;
Then saw him—out of reach as you I see—
Worshipped his strength, the brown breast broad
and bare,
The arms that bent the oar, and grew aware
Of what life means, and why it is good to be ;
And yearned for him with all her body sweet,
Her lithe cold arms, and chill wet bosom's beat,
Vowed him her beauty's unillumined shrine :
So I—seeing you above me—turn and tire,
Sick with an empty ache of long desire
To drag you down, to hold you, make you mine !

II.

Attained at last—the lifelong longing's prize !
Raped from the world of air where warm loves glow,
She bears him through her water-world below ;
Yet in those strange, glad, fair, mysterious eyes
The shadow of the after-sorrow lies,
And of the coming hour, when she shall know
What she has lost in having gained him so,
And whether death life's longing satisfies.
She shall find out the meaning of despair,
And know the anguish of a granted prayer,
And how, all ended, all is yet undone.
So I—I long for what, far off, you shine,
Not what you must be ere you could be mine,
That which would crown despair if it were won.

LEAVES OF LIFE.

1888.

EDITH (NESBIT) BLAND.

I.—WINTER VIOLETS.

To M. O.

DEATH-WHITE azaleas watched beside my bed,
And tried to tell me tales of Southern lands;
But they in hothouse air were born and bred,
And they were gathered by a stranger's hands:
They were not sweet, they never had been free,
And all their pallid beauty had no voice for me.
And all I longed for was one common flower
Fed by soft mists and rainy English air,
A flower that knew the woods, the leafless bower,
The wet, green moss, the hedges sharp and bare—
A flower that spoke my language, and could tell
Of all the woods and ways my heart remembers well.
Then came your violets—and at once I heard
The sparrows chatter on the dripping eaves,
The full stream's babbling inarticulate word,
The plash of rain on big wet ivy-leaves;
I saw the woods where thick the dead leaves lie,
And smelt the fresh earth's scent—the scent of memory.
The unleafed trees—the lichens green and gray,
The wide sad-coloured meadows, and the brown
Fields that sleep now, and dream of harvest day,
Hiding their seeds like hopes in hearts pent down—
A thousand dreams, a thousand memories
Your violets' voices breathed in unheard melodies—
Unheard by all but me. I heard, I blessed
The little English, English-speaking things
For their sweet selves that laid my wish to rest,
For their sweet help that lent my dreaming wings;
And, most of all, for all the thoughts of you
Which makethem smell more sweet than other violets do.

II.—AMONG HIS BOOKS.

A SILENT room—gray with a dusty blight
Of loneliness;
A room with not enough of life or light
Its form to dress.
Books enough though! The groaning sofa bears
A goodly store—
Books on the window-seat, and on the chairs,
And on the floor.
Books of all sorts of soul, all sorts of age,
All sorts of face—
Black-letter, vellum, and the flimsy page
Of commonplace.
All bindings, from the cloth whose hue distracts
One's weary nerves,
To yellow parchment, binding rare old tracts
It serves—deserves.
Books on the shelves, and in the cupboard books,
Worthless and rare—
Books on the mantelpiece—where'er one looks
Books everywhere!
Books! books! the only things in life I find
Not wholly vain.
Books in my hands—books in my heart enshrined—
Books in my brain.
My friends are they: for children and for wife
They serve me too;
For these alone, of all dear things in life,
Have I found true.
They do not flatter, change, deny, deceive—
Ah no—not they!
The same editions which one night you leave
You find next day.

You don't find railway novels where you left
Your Elzevirs !
Your Aldines don't betray you—leave bereft
Your lonely years !
And yet this common book of Common Prayer
My heart prefers,
Because the names upon the fly-leaf there
Are mine and hers.
It's a dead flower that makes it open so—
Forget-me-not—
The Marriage Service . . . well, my dear, you know
Who first forgot.
Those were the days when in the choir we two
Sat—used to sing—
When I believed in God, in love, in you—
In everything.
Through quiet lanes to church we used to come,
Happy and good,
Clasp hands through sermon, and go slowly home
Down through the wood.
Kisses ? A certain yellow rose no doubt
That porch still shows,
Whenever I hear kisses talked about
I smell that rose !
No—I don't blame you—since you only proved
My choice unwise,
And taught me books should trusted be and loved,
Not lips and eyes !
And so I keep your book—your flower—to show
How much I care
For the dear memory of what, you know,
You never were.

III.—MORNING SONG.

BABY darling, wake and see,
Morning's here, my little rose ;
Open eyes and smile at me
Ere I clasp and kiss you close.
Baby darling, smile ! for then
Mother sees the sun again.

Baby darling, sleep no more !
All the other flowers have done
With their sleeping—you, my flower,
Are the only sleepy one ;
All the pink-frilled daisies shout :
" Bring our little sister out ! "

Baby darling, in the sun
Birds are singing, sweet and shrill ;
And my bird's the only one
That is nestled softly still.
Baby—if you only knew,
All the birds are calling you !

Baby darling, all is bright,
God has brought the sunshine here ;
And the sleepy silent night
Comes back soon enough, my dear !
Wake, my darling, night is done
Sunbeams call my little one !

MISCELLANEOUS POEMS.

EDITH (NESBIT) BLAND.

I.—BALLAD OF A BRIDAL.

“OH, fill me flagons full and fair,
Of red wine and of white,
And, maidens mine, my bower prepare,
It is my wedding night !

“Braid up my hair with gem and flower,
And make me fair and fine,
The day has dawned that brings the hour
When my desire is mine !”

They decked her bower with roses blown.
With rushes strewed the floor,
And sewed more jewels on her gown
Than ever she wore before.

She wore two roses in her face,
Two jewels in her e'en,
Her hair was crowned with sunset rays
Her brows shone white between.

“Tapers at the bed's foot,” she saith,
“Two tapers at the head !”
(It seemed more like the bed of death
Than like a bridal bed.)

He came. He took her hands in his :
He kissed her on the face :
“There is more heaven in thy kiss
Than in Our Lady's grace !”

He kissed her once, he kissed her twice
He kissed her three times o'er,
He kissed her brow, he kissed her eyes
He kissed her mouth's red flower.

"Oh, love ! What is it ails thy knight ?

I sicken and I pine—

Is it the red wine or the white,
Or that sweet kiss of thine ?"

"No kiss, no wine or white or red

Can make such sickness be :—

Lie down and die on thy bride-bed,
For I have poisoned thee !

"And though the curse of saints and men

Be for the deed on me,

I would it were to do again,
Since thou wert false to me !

"Thou shouldst have loved or one or none,

Nor *she* nor I loved twain ;

But we are twain thou hast undone,
And therefore art thou slain.

"And when before my God I stand,

With no base flesh between,

I shall hold up my guilty hand,
And He shall judge it clean !"

He fell across the bridal bed,

Between the tapers pale.

"I, first, shall see our God"—he said,

"And *I* will tell thy tale ;

"And, if God judge thee as I do

Then art thou justified :

I loved thee, and I was not true,
And that was why I died.

"If I might judge thee—thou shouldst be

First of the saints on high,

But, ah, I fear God loveth thee
Not half so dear as I !"

II.—A TRAGEDY.

I.

AMONG his books he sits all day
To think and read and write ;
He does not smell the new-mown hay
The roses red and white.

I walk among them all alone,
His silly stupid wife ;
The world seems tasteless, dead and done—
An empty thing is life.

At night his window casts a square
Of light upon the lawn ;
I sometimes walk and watch it there
Until the chill of dawn.

I have no brain to understand
The books he loves to read ;
I only have a heart and hand
He does not seem to need.

He calls me "Child"—lays on my hair
Thin fingers, cold and mild ;
Oh ! God of Love, who answers prayer,
I wish I were a child !

And no one sees and no one knows
(He least would know or see)
That ere love gathers next year's rose
Death will have gathered me ;

And on my grave will bindweed pink
And round-faced daisies grow ;
He still will read and write and think,
And never, never know !

III.—A TRAGEDY.

II.

I T'S lonely in my study here alone
Now you are gone ;
I loved to see your white gown mid the flowers,
While, hours on hours,
I studied—toiled to weave a crown of fame
About your name.
I liked to hear your sweet, low laughter ring ;
To hear you sing
About the house while I sat reading here,
My child, my dear ;
To know you glad with all the life-joys fair
I dared not share.
I thought there would be time enough to show
My love, you know,
When I could lay with laurels at your feet
Love's roses sweet ;
I thought I could taste love when fame was won—
Now both are done !
Thank God, your child-heart knew not how to miss
The passionate kiss,
Which I dared never give, lest love should rise
Mighty, unwise,
And bind me, with my life-work incomplete,
Beside your feet.
You never knew, you lived and were content ;
My one chance went ;
You died, my little one, and are at rest—
And I, unblest,
Look at these broken fragments of my life,
My child, my wife.

IV.—THE GHOST.

THE year fades, as the west wind sighs,
 And droops in many-coloured ways,
 But your soft presence never dies
 From out the pathway of my days.
 The spring is where you are ; but still
 You, far away, to me can bring
 Sweet flowers and dreams enough to fill
 A thousand empty worlds with spring.
 I walk the wet and leafless woods,
 Your spirit ever floats before,
 And lights its russet solitudes
 With blossoms summer never wore.
 I sit beside my lonely fire,
 The shadows almost bring your face,
 And light with memory and desire
 My desolated dwelling-place.
 Among my books I feel your hand
 That turns the page just past my sight ;
 Sometimes behind my chair you stand
 And read the foolish rhymes I write.
 The old piano's keys I press
 In random chords—until I hear
 Your voice, your rustling silken dress,
 And smell the roses that you wear.
 I do not weep now any more,
 I think I hardly even sigh.
 I would not let you think I bore
 The kind of wound of which men die.
 Believe that smooth content has grown
 Over the ghastly grave of pain ;
 Content ! Oh lips that were my own
 That I shall never kiss again !

SONNETS.

EDITH (NESBIT) BLAND.

NIGHT AND MORNING.

I. NIGHT.

WHILE yet the woods were hardly more than brown,
Filled with the stillness of the dying day
The folds and farms and faint green pastures lay,
And bells chimed softly from the gray-walled town.
The dark fields with the corn and poppies sown,
The dark delicious dreamy forest way,
The hope of April for the soul of May—
On all of these night's wide soft wings swept down.
One yellow star pierced through the clear, pure sky,
And showed above the network of the wood,
The silence of whose crowded solitude
Was broken but by little woodland things
Rustling dead leaves with restless feet and wings,
And by a kiss that ended in a sigh.

II. MORNING.

The wind of morn awoke before the line
Of dawn's pearl haze made pale the eastern sky,
And woke the birds and woodland creatures shy,
And sighed night's dirge through tremulous boughs of pine
The north and south sky flushed, and the divine
Rose-radiance touched the moorland lone and high,
While still the wood was dusk, where, by and by,
Splendid and strong the risen sun should shine.
It shone—on two that through the woodland came
With eyes averted and cold hands that clung,
And weary lips that knew forbidden things,
And hearts made sick with vain imaginings—
And over all the wood its glory flung,
The wood—that never more could be the same.

William Watson.

1858.

WILLIAM WATSON was born at Burley-in-Wharfedale on the 2nd of August, 1858; but his earliest work in verse is associated with Liverpool, near which city his later childhood and early manhood were spent. Some youthful lyrics were published during the year 1875 in *The Argus*, a Liverpool weekly journal; and in 1880 appeared his first volume, "The Prince's Quest and Other Poems," which, though it altogether failed to win general recognition, had the good fortune to receive praiseful greeting from Dante Rossetti and other keen-sighted critics. In the title-poem are to be found numerous traces of temporary subjection to the influence of the so-called æsthetic school, and neither the arbitrary supernaturalism of the story nor the frequent archaism of the style was really indicative of the writer's true bent; but "The Prince's Quest" contains descriptive passages of singular beauty, and the melodies and harmonies of verse in the concluding bridal-song, from which we take one stanza, sufficed to show that Mr. Watson was already a master of music. The Queen of the City of Youth awaits her coming Prince,—

"Often when evening sobered all the air,
No doubt but she would sit and marvel where
He tarried, by the bounds of what strange sea;
And peradventure look at intervals

Forth of the windows of her palace walls,
And watch the gloaming darken fount and tree ;
And think on twilight shores, with dreaming caves
Full of the groping of bewildered waves,
Full of the murmur of their hollow halls."

The grave dignity of substance and fine chastity of form which are distinguishing characteristics of Mr. Watson's most mature work were not less manifest in the few sonnets and other short poems contained in this early volume,—witness the beautiful lyric, "Changed Voices."

"Last night the sea-wind was to me
A metaphor of liberty,
And every wave along the beach
A starlit music seemed to be.

"To-day the sea-wind is to me
A fettered soul that would be free.
And dumbly striving after speech
The tides yearn landward painfully.

"To-morrow how shall sound for me
The changing voice of wind and sea ?
What tidings shall be born of each ?
What rumour of what mystery ?"

Mr. Watson's next volume, "Epigrams" (1884), contained a century of poems, each consisting of a single quatrain, each devoted to a single thought or fancy, and all characterised by a severe condensation in the matter of utterance which justified the general title, though there were few attempts to achieve that startling or arresting "point" which, in the popular conception, is the true *raison d'être* of the epigram. There is in the finest of these poems that flawlessness of imaginative rendering which the exigent form demands ; and even in the later and more

elaborate work by which Mr. Watson first caught the ear of the world he has not surpassed the satisfying perfectness of these cameos and intaglios of verse. The first of the three epigrams given below has for heading, "After Reading 'Tamburlaine the Great'": the others appear without titles.

"Your Marlowe's page I close, my Shakspeare's ope.

How welcome—after drum and trumpet's din—

The continuity, the long slow slope

And vast curves of the gradual violin !

* * * * *

" 'Tis human nature's happiest height to be

A spirit melodious, lucid, poised, and whole ;

Second in order of felicity

I hold it to have walked with such a soul.

* * * * *

"The Poet gathers fruit from every tree,

Yea, grapes from thorns and figs from thistles he.

Pluck'd by his hand, the basest weed that grows

Towers to a lily, reddens to a rose."

In 1885 Mr. Watson contributed to the *National Review* a remarkable sonnet-sequence "Ver Tenebrosum," dealing with the events of the Soudanese war, and comprising at least half-a-dozen sonnets which for impressiveness of conception and dignity of execution have been surpassed by few of our greatest sonneteers. It is here that we find the weighty line,

"The sense of greatness keeps a nation great";

here too is the splendid tribute to Gordon; here the impassioned impeachment of a false peace in "Reported Concessions"; and here the sombre grandeur of the "false dream" in which he saw the foe prevail, and heard the moan,—

“Our greatness is become a tale
To tell our children’s babes when we are old.
They shall put by their playthings to be told
How England once, before the days of bale,
Throned above trembling, puissant, grandiose, calm,
Held Asia’s richest jewel in her palm;
And with unnumbered isles barbaric she
The broad hem of her glistening robe impearled,
Then when she wound her arms about the world,
And had for vassal the obsequious sea.”

In the magazine just named appeared also “Wordsworth’s Grave,” the elegiac poem which, as the *pièce de résistance* of Mr. Watson’s next volume (1890), first gained for him due recognition. In passionate impulse “Wordsworth’s Grave” has possibly been surpassed both by earlier and by later work from the same hand, but the prevailing estimate of it is abundantly justified by the alliance of imagination proper with a profundity of reflection and a penetration of insight which would make it noteworthy as a contribution to interpretative criticism, had it not what it assuredly has—the finer, rarer charm of essential poetry. The quality of the fruit produced by this happy grafting is manifest in the following stanzas of masterly characterisation :—

“Poet, who sleepest by this wandering wave !

When thou wast born, what birth-gift hadst thou then ?

To thee what wealth was that the Immortals gave,

The wealth thou gavest in thy turn to men ?

“Not Milton’s keen translunar music thine :

Not Shakspeare’s cloudless, boundless human view ;

Not Shelley’s flush of rose on peaks divine ;

Nor yet the wizard twilight Coleridge knew.

“What hadst thou that could make such large amends

For all thou hadst not and thy peers possessed,

Motion and fire, swift means to radiant ends ?—

Thou hadst for weary feet the gift of rest.

"From Shelley's dazzling glow or thunderous haze,
From Byron's tempest-anger, tempest-mirth,
Men turned to thee and found—not blast and blaze,
Tumult of tottering heavens, but peace on earth.

"Nor peace that grows by Lethe, scentless flower,
There in white languors to decline and cease ;
But peace whose names are also rapture, power,
Clear sight, and love : for these are parts of peace."

The combination of qualities, rarely found in helpful alliance, which confers distinction upon "Wordsworth's Grave," makes itself not less visible in the lines addressed "To Professor Dowden"; in the poem written "In Laleham Churchyard," a fine appreciation of the genius of Matthew Arnold, a poet with whom Mr. Watson was much more in common than would at first seem; in the sonnet "At the Grave of Charles Lamb in Edmonton"; in the dignified tribute to the work of Tennyson, the only one of many threnodies which can be pronounced worthy of its great theme; and, lastly, in the poem celebrating "The Shelley Centenary," where we have not only imagination and insight, but the impulse, the passion, and the fire which some critics, not wholly unappreciative, fail to find in certain other verse of Mr. Watson's which they confess to have every charm but these. Perhaps the most truly characteristic qualities of Mr. Watson's poetry are those suggested by the word "weight." To every motive which he selects his manner of conception and treatment gives elevation and dignity: it is the true grand manner which never degenerates into the merely grandiose. His utterance is not effusive—indeed, its accent of distinction is largely due to the reticence and restraint of the master-

singer who knows that he can produce his effects without raising his voice to force the note ; but it is always affluent in thought, imagination, language : it is, to use the fine phrase of Keats, "a large utterance,"—stately in its sober austerities, and neither less nor more stately in its rich but never ostentatious adornment. In one respect Mr. Watson's contribution to the poetry of his century leaves behind it a certain sense of disappointment. His characterisation of Gray may not unfitly be applied to himself : his is a "frugal note." The poetical outcome of thirty-five years of life could be easily compressed into one not very large volume ; and the world's rough-and-ready way of estimating vitality and fecundity by a coarser appraisement than that of quality alone is not wholly fatuous or unjust. It is momentum that tells, and for momentum we need mass as well as velocity. So far, the work of Mr. Watson may truthfully be described as a masterly performance ; but it may with greater fulness of truth be described as a magnificent promise. The scope of his unrealised possibilities it were vain to conjecture, for in the past he has provided surprises of imaginative benefaction ; but if life and health be spared to the writer of the "Ver Tenebrosum" sonnets, the "Epigrams," "Wordsworth's Grave," and the stanzas for the Shelley Centenary, he may, and ought, to take his place among the *diu majores* of song.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

Rennell Rodd.

1858.

JAMES RENNELL RODD was born on November 9th, 1858. At Oxford he won the Newdigate prize, with a poem on Sir Walter Raleigh, in 1880. In 1883 he entered the diplomatic service, and in the following year was appointed to the Berlin Embassy, which he served for about four years as private secretary to Sir Edward Malet, after which he was attached to the Legation at Athens.

Mr. Rodd's Newdigate prize poem was printed in 1880, and was followed by "Songs of the South" (1881), "Poems in Many Lands" (1883), "Feda and Other Poems" (1886), "The Unknown Madonna" (1888), and "The Violet Crown and Songs of England" (1891). His prose works are "Frederick, Crown Prince and Emperor: a Biographical Sketch, with an Introduction by the Empress Frederick" (1888), and the "Customs and Lore of Modern Greece" (1892).

Mr. Rodd's poetic work shows a fluency which is obviously spontaneous, but which is apt to betray him. His Pegasus is such easy riding, and the enjoyment of the mere exercise is apparently so great to him that he is prone to hold the reins loosely, and to allow himself to be carried along carelessly by a steed which needs wise guidance and strong control. There is, however, genuine poetic impulse, if it is

sometimes, to quote the *Athenæum*, "lost in the commonplace of too idle versifying." Some of his strongest work is in the "Feda and Other Poems" volume. "The Journey Home" is an admirable example. It shows an eye for the picturesque, associated with facile powers of description, and breathes the spirit which inspires the "Songs of England" of the later volume, and which is in the best sense patriotic, because in the broad sense domestic. "Albano" and "Petrarch, part.iii.," may also be specially remarked. The following lines, "Good-Bye," addressed to a child, show the poet's tender feeling towards children:—

"Good-night, and wings of angels
Beat round your little bed,
And all white hopes and holy
Be on your golden head !

"You know not why I love you,
You little lips that kiss ;
But if you should remember
Remember me with this ;

"He said that the longest journey
Was all on the road to rest ;
He said the children's wisdom
Was the wisest and the best.

"He said there was joy in sorrow
Far more than the tears in mirth,
And he knew there was God in heaven,
Because there was Love on earth."

For the rest, Mr. Rodd's favourite subjects are the memorials of classical antiquity which he has visited in his travels, with the living dead they bring before his eyes, and the celebration of old-time nobility and modern heroism.

ALFRED H. MILES.

SONGS OF THE SOUTH.

1881.

RENNELL RODD.

AT TIBER MOUTH.

(Rome, 1881.)

THE low plains stretch to the west with a glimmer
of rustling weeds,
Where the waves of a golden river wind home by
the marshy meads ;
And the strong wind born of the sea grows faint with
a sickly breath,
As it stays in the fretting rushes and blows on the
dews of death.
We came to the silent city in the blaze of the noon-
tide heat,
When the sound of a whisper rang through the
length of the lonely street ;
No tree in the clefted ruin, no echo of song nor
sound,
But the dust of a world forgotten lay under the
barren ground.
There are shrines under these green hillocks to the
beautiful gods that sleep,
Where they prayed in the stormy season for lives
gone out on the deep ;
And here in the grave street sculptured, old record
of loves and tears,
By the dust of the nameless slave, forgotten a thou-
sand years.

Not ever again at even shall ship sail in on the
breeze,
Where the hulls of their gilded galleys came home
from a hundred seas,
For the marsh plants grow in her haven, the marsh
birds breed in her bay,
And a mile to the shoreless westward the water has
passed away.
But the sea-folk gathering rushes come up from the
windy shore,
So the song that the years have silenced grows
musical there once more ;
And now and again unburied, like some still voice
from the dead,
They light on the fallen shoulder and the lines of a
marble head.
But we went from the sorrowful city and wandered
away at will,
And thought of the breathing marble and the words
that are music still.
How full were their lives that laboured, in their
fetterless strength and far
From the ways that our feet have chosen as the
sunlight is from the star,
They clung to the chance and promise that once
while the years are free,
Look over our life's horizon as the sun looks over
the sea,
But we wait for a day that dawns not, and cry for
unclouded skies,
And while we are deep in dreaming the light that
was o'er us dies ;
We know not what of the present we shall stretch
out our hand to save

Who sing of the life we long for, and not of the life
we have ;
And yet if the chance were with us to gather the
days misspent,
Should we change the old resting-places, the
wandering ways we went ?
They were strong, but the years are stronger ; they
are grown but a name that thrills,
And the wreck of their marble glory lies ghost-like
over their hills.
So a shadow fell o'er our dreaming for the weary
heart of the past,
For the seed that the years have scattered, to reap
so little at last.
And we went to the sea-shore forest, through a long
colonnade of pines,
Where the skies peep in and the sea, with a flitting
of silver lines.
And we came on an open place in the green deep
heart of the wood,
Where I think in the years forgotten, an altar of
Faunus stood ;
From a spring in the long dark grasses two rivulets
rise and run
By the length of their sandy borders where the
snake lies coiled in the sun.
And the stars of the white narcissus lie over the
grass like snow,
And beyond in the shadowy places the crimson
cyclamens grow.
Far up from the wave home yonder the sea-winds
murmuring pass,
The branches quiver and creak and the lizard starts
in the grass.

And we lay in the untrod moss and pillowed our
cheeks with flowers,
While the sun went over our heads, and we took no
count of the hours;
From the end of the waving branches and under
the cloudless blue,
Like sunbeams chained for a banner, the threadlike
gossamers flew.
And the joy of the woods came o'er us, and we felt
that our world was young
With the gladness of years unspent, and the sorrow
of life unsung.
So we passed with a sound of singing along to the
seaward way,
Where the sails of the fishermen folk came home-
ward over the bay ;
For a cloud grew over the forest, and darkened the
sea-god's shrine,
And the hills of the silent city were only a ruby
line.
But the sun stood still on the waves as we passed
from the fading shores,
And shone on our boat's red bulwarks, and the
golden blades of the oars ;
And it seemed as we steered for the sunset that we
passed through a twilight sea,
From the gloom of a world forgotten to the light of
a world to be.

THE UNKNOWN MADONNA AND OTHER
POEMS.

1888.

RENNELL RODD.

THE UNKNOWN MADONNA.

(Perugia.)

I KNOW that picture's meaning,—the unknown,
Called school of Umbria; it stands alone;
Those prayerful fingers never worked to fame,—
A master's hand, though silence keeps his name.
But for the meaning, gaze awhile and plain
The thought he worked in warms to life again;
Love made those features living, such a face
Smiled once,—on whom? Say in a lofty place
He could not climb to,—in those eyes' blue deeps
The reverence of unreach'd ideals keeps
The human memory, not a face of dreams,
And coldly beautiful, but one that seems
Caught in the likeness that a lover's eyes
Devoutly worshipped to idealize;
And since creation is akin to prayer
He made that face God's Mother, and set her there
Among the lilies by the hill-side town,
And then the child, a flower-face to crown
The human love-dream, little hands entwined
Round one surrendered finger, to my mind
Just such close watching, tenderness expressed,
As those who miss it learn to look for best.
Perugian, say we,—look, the lilies lean
Against the mountain, dips the vale between,

Yonder's Assisi on the nearer ridge,
And that's the gorge that hides the giant bridge
Joining Spoleto, and beyond, away
Hill-crests like waves in purple to mid-day.
That was his thought, to make his art her shrine,
And lift her human up to the divine ;
So smiles Madonna, so evermore sits she
Against the Umbrian blue mountain sea.

Why do I think so ? Why, because if I
Could paint just one such picture ere I die,
Make one thought everlasting, I would choose
His theme, the Mother and the Child, and use
A face as sweet as this was ; in the Child
Reflect its beauty, only undefiled
Of pain and sorrow and knowledge, and would set
Both in a garden that is liliated yet
With beds her own hands tended, and enclose
All in a girdle of the hills she chose
Of earth's fair homes to dwell in, keeping so
The tender fragrance of dead years ago.

I would not change these few square feet for halls
Of Ghirlandajo, for the magic walls
Of this your Cambio,—I would rather keep
My silent record of his nameless sleep,
Dream back his story through the long blank years—
Believe those lilies once were dewed with tears.

THE VIOLET CROWN AND SONGS OF
ENGLAND.

1891.

RENNELL RODD.

SPRING THOUGHTS.

(Athens, 1890.)

MY England, island England, such leagues and
leagues away,
It's years since I was with thee, when April wanes
to May :

Years since I saw the primrose, and watched the
brown hillside
Put on white crowns of blossom and blush like
April's bride ;

Years since I heard thy skylark, and caught the
throbbing note
Which all the soul of springtide sends through the
blackbird's throat.

Oh England, island England, if it has been my lot
To live long years in alien lands, with men who love
thee not,

I do but love thee better who know each wind that
blows,
The wind that slays the blossom, the wind that buds
the rose,

The wind that shakes the taper mast and keeps the
topsail furled,
The wind that braces nerve and arm to battle with
the world :

I love thy moss-deep grasses, thy great untortured
trees,
The cliffs that wall thy havens, the weed-scents of
thy seas.

The dreamy river reaches, the quiet English homes,
The milky path of sorel down which the springtide
comes.

O land so loved through length of years, so tended
and caressed,
The land that never stranger wronged nor foeman
dared to waste,

Remember those thou speedest forth round all the
world to be
Thy witness to the nations, thy warders on the sea !

And keep for those who leave thee and find no
better place,
The olden smile of welcome, the unchanged mother
face !

Mrs. Ernest Radford.

1858.

MRS. ERNEST RADFORD—*née* Dollie Maitland—was born December 3rd, 1858. She published her first book under the prettily and whimsically modest title, "A Light Load" (1891). A tiny, fragile load it is indeed, but not less exquisite than it is unsubstantial. It is a book of songs, and the songs are full of instinctive music, which soars naturally. They have the choice, unsought felicity of a nature essentially lyrical. Always finished in style, with the distinction which can never be acquired, they have almost an air of impromptu, and one might imagine the writer to be little conscious of the process by which they have come to be so finished. With certain delicate, remote echoes of the poets who have written the most haunting lyrics—of Heine, of Tennyson—they have the originality of a single temperament, of which one feels they are the direct outcome, the spontaneous, sincere expression. And this temperament, emotional as it is, has attained to see life steadily, to accept the hours of joy and of sadness without extravagant outcry. There is a restraint, a sense of measure, in the expression of varying moods, which gives a singular charm to these really passionate and deeply-felt lyrics. In the lines placed by way of dedication at the beginning—lines which any poet might be proud to have written—there is

a thrill of profound emotion which comes with all the stronger effect on account of the strenuous quietness with which it is expressed :—

“The love within my heart for thee
Before the world was had its birth,
It is the part God gives to me
Of the great wisdom of the earth.”

These four lines seem to have something final about them—seem to say concerning the supreme devotion, the sacrament and worship of love, all that needs to be said. Something of the same fineness of appropriate expression occurs again and again, in something the same inevitable way, in many parts of the book. Here are some lines which have not a little of Wordsworth’s “natural magic” of feeling and style—the perfect communion with Nature bringing with it the perfect expression :—

“When you are lonely, full of care,
Or sad with some new sorrow,
And when your tired fancy hides
The brightness of the morrow,
Ah, turn your footsteps to the woods
And meadows, where the rills
Are quietly flowing, when the moon
And stars shine on the hills.

“Upon your brow the great wise trees
Will breathe, and something sweet
Will reach you from the fragrant grass
You press beneath your feet ;
And some fair spirit of the fields,
Peaceful and happy-eyed,
Will find a way into your heart,
I think, and there abide.”

And in the lovely little lyric beginning “Amid a crown of radiant hills” (p. 613) there is the same rare

quality, the same sympathetic delicacy of touch. Again, in another order of emotion, take the last stanza of the "Spring Song" (p. 613); and yet again, the last stanza of "Evening," the following poem which has something curiously rare and intimate, so subtle a simplicity, and, in the last line, a touch of inexpressible magic:—

"Listen and we shall hear the voice
Of Evening, her name she told
When we stayed our boat by the shore to know
What wee flower shone 'neath the willow so,
And her hair was radiant gold.

"Now veiled in grey with silent step,
She walks where shades are deep,
And the great trees hear, and the blossoms know,
The song she sings, and her music low
Is charming them to sleep.

"My unseen brother and sister,
Who dwell 'neath the roofs we pass,
Are you sad and weary with toil and care?
My rest is full, I have rest to spare,
I whisper it through your grass."

This "Light Load," this book of songs and snatches, so musical, so finished, so tenderly sincere, so full of contentment in love, of delight in the flowers and birds of spring, has the charm of a gracious unity—the unity, as I have said, of a special temperament. This augurs well for the future of a very genuine poet, whose first book is already so full of exquisite accomplishment. What Mrs. Radford will do it is impossible to foretell, but the hitherto unpublished poem, "Ah, bring it not," which belongs to a later date than most of the contents of the volume, seems to me to point towards work still more intimately

personal, still more strenuously simple and expressive, than even the simplest and most expressive of the poems previously published :—

SONG.

“ Ah, bring it not so grudgingly,
The gift thou bringest me ;
Thy kind hands shining from afar
Let me in welcome see,
And know the treasure that they hold
For purest gold.

“ And, with glad feet that linger not,
Come through the summer land,
Through the sweet fragrance of the flowers,
Swiftly to where I stand,
And in the sunlight let me wear
Thy token rare.

“ Fairer for me will be the day,
Fair all the days will be,
And thy rich gift upon my breast
Will make me fair to see,
And beautiful, through all the years,
In joys and tears.

“ Ah come, and coming do not ask
The answering gift of mine,
Thou hast the pride of offering,
Taste now the joy divine,
And come, content to pass to-day
Empty away.”

ARTHUR SYMONS.

A LIGHT LOAD.

1891.

DOLLIE RADFORD.

I.—SPRING SONG.

AH love, the sweet spring blossoms cling
To many a broken wind-tossed bough,
And young birds among branches sing
That mutely hung till now.

The little new-born things which lie
In dewy meadows, sleep and dream
Beside the brook that twinkles by
To some great lonely stream.

And children, now the day is told,
From many a warm and cosy nest,
Look up to see the young moon hold
The old moon to her breast.

Dear love, my pulses throb and start
To-night with longings sweet and new,
And young hopes beat within a heart
Grown old in loving you.

II.—SONG.

AMID a crown of radiant hills,
A little wood with blossoms rare
Breathes sweetly, while the young lark trills
His new learnt melody and fills
The fragrant air.

Among its boughs the fresh winds play,
And, where the spreading branches part,
The sunlight drops from spray to spray,
And seeks the ferny streams which stray
Within its heart.

And there the wild bee fills his cells,
And murmurs through the golden hours,
And charmèd fancies and sweet spells,
Are woven in the tall blue-bells
And cuckoo-flowers.

There many a mossy bank entwined
With shining leaves awaits our choice,
Come swiftly love, my soul unbind
With thy dear looks, that it may find
Its prisoned voice.

III.—“NIGHT.”

AND art thou come again, oh Night;
I know thee by thy starry crown,
And by the mists of violet light
Which gather where thy robes fall down.
I know thee by the purple clouds
Thy strong wings spread around the moon,
And by the stillness which enshrouds
Thy presence, thou art come too soon.
Too soon, for lo thy fair love Sleep
Turns not her sweet face to the skies,
She lingers where the shadows creep,
And stays to kiss our children's eyes.

But when her gentle hands have blest
Our homesteads, she will come to thee,
And through the holy hours of rest
Thine arms will hold her safe, and she
Will hear the promises again
Thou bringest from the distant spheres,
And learn the reason of our pain,
And meaning of our bitter tears.

Thine eyes are steadfast and I dare
 Their mighty mystery to read,
But mine are dimmed by thought and care
 And fail me in my greatest need.
I watch for thee, wilt thou not bring
 One message to my fainting heart ?
Through summer-time and snow and spring
 I watch for thee. Must thou depart
Thus silently—when will it come,
 That perfect day which we await ?
For us thy lips are ever dumb,
 And voiceless is thy calm estate,
Ah ! tell thy fair love Sleep that she
 May touch me when she passes by,
And whisper what she hears from thee
 In some sweet lullaby.

IV.—ORPHEUS.

WE wandered in that shadow-land,
 My fair love, you and I,
Through all its strangeness hand in hand
 We journeyed silently.
My lyre is hanging cold and dumb,
 Mute with our triumph song,
I have no voice now you are come,
 Whom I have sought so long.
But I will bring you in Love's land,
 Into Love's highest place,
And crown you there, and understand
 The wonder of your face.
And then my joyous song shall rise
 To sun and moon and star ;
And all the worlds beyond the skies
 Shall tell how fair you are.

V.—BY THE SEA.

THE clouds have gathered soon to-night,
They hang above the quiet sea,
And through the air a muffled sound
Is borne to me

From that dim island where the souls
Of all the Ages lie at rest;
It beats upon my throbbing brain
And troubled breast.

If thou wert standing on the shore
Beside me now, and held my hand,
I think that I should hear it plain
And understand

For there is one note in it all,
Which loud and clear has come to me,
And I have caught it in my heart
To tell to thee.

“Eyes steadfast from the watch of worlds,
Hearts big with secrets of the spheres,
We have no power to move you now
With hopes or fears.”

“No power,” thy soul has filled my soul,
Thy life has rounded all of mine,
Thy love has girt me with a strength
Which is divine.

And when that sound perchance one day
Comes to us with a mighty roll,
We two shall stand unmoved, and hear
And learn the whole.

Graham R. Tomson.

1860.

PERHAPS one could hardly find a volume so typical of what cultured folk were caring for in 1889 (had been caring for for say the preceding ten years) than "The Bird-Bride, a volume of Ballads and Sonnets, by Graham R. Tomson" (Longmans). Weird Scots ballads after the manner just then revived by Mr. Swinburne, imitations of the Greek anthology, poems on pictures, bookish poems, *vers de société* in Mr. Dobson's metres, reminiscences of Herrick, ballades, rondeaus and villanelles, folk-songs, "marches," translations from Provençal poets; all these common interests Mrs. Tomson managed to vivify with a touch of her own individuality.

Her title poem, dealing with a charming story of frequent occurrence, in various forms, in folk-lore, showed considerable skill and some imaginative power in the treatment of such themes. "Deid Folks' Ferry" is also among the best of those ballads in which people say "brither" for brother, and "blaw" for blow. All the poems in the volume showed rare sensitiveness to dainty and distinguished influences, and there was not a page in it without some charm of cadence or delicately-chosen word. Perhaps it was by her sonnets (as being less open to the influences of fashion) that Mrs. Tomson was most safely to be judged a poet. In these Mrs.

Tomson speaks with an accent of sincerity which all her enthusiasm for cats and first editions is unable to inspire.

Her best verses have true passion and tenderness, as well as æsthetic (sensitiveness) and artistic finish. She sometimes strikes a deep note of reflection as in "The Smile of All-Wisdom," and especially in such a poem as the less sensational "Two Songs," in which she so suggestively contrasts the cadence of the song of a bird and the piping of a shepherd lad.

In her second volume, "A Summer Night and Other Poems" (Methuen), Mrs. Tomson forsakes her *bric-à-brac* and her French forms, and deals with themes of broader, commoner appeal. We feel she is singing more intimately, giving us more of what we fondly call the "real self." Her themes are divided between her London garden,—the cloistral seclusion of which seems deepened by the sound of wayfaring feet ever going by its walls—and the downs of the south coast. She gives us charming pictures of each, but especially charming are her London impressions; for Mrs. Tomson participates in that feeling for the poetry of towns of which we have seen a recent revival:—

"Never for us those dreams aforetime shown
Of white-winged angels on a shiny stair,
Or seas of sapphire round a jasper throne:
Give us the spangled dusk, the turbid street;
The dun, dim pavement trod by myriad feet,
Stained with the yellow lamplight here and there;
The chill blue skies beyond the spires of stone."

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

THE BIRD-BRIDE.

A VOLUME OF BALLADS AND SONNETS.

1889.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

I.—BALLAD OF THE BIRD-BRIDE.

(Eskimo.)

THEY never come back, though I loved them well ;
I watch the South in vain ;
The snow-bound skies are blear and grey,
Waste and wide is the wild gull's way,
And she comes never again.

Years ago, on the flat white strand,
I won my sweet sea-girl :
Wrapped in my coat of the snow-white fur,
I watched the wild birds settle and stir,
The grey gulls gather and whirl.

One, the greatest of all the flock,
Perched on an ice-floe bare,
Called and cried as her heart were broke,
And straight they were changed, that fleet bird-folk,
To women young and fair.

Swift I sprang from my hiding-place
And held the fairest fast ;
I held her fast, the sweet, strange thing :
Her comrades skirled, but they all took wing,
And smote me as they passed.

I bore her safe to my warm snow house ;
Full sweetly there she smiled ;
And yet, whenever the shrill winds blew,
She would beat her long white arms anew,
And her eyes glanced quick and wild.

But I took her to wife, and clothed her warm
 With skins of the gleaming seal;
Her wandering glances sank to rest
When she held a babe to her fair, warm breast,
 And she loved me dear and leal.

Together we tracked the fox and the seal,
 And at her behest I swore
That bird and beast my bow might slay
For meat and for raiment, day by day.
 But never a grey gull more.

A weariful watch I keep for aye
 'Mid the snow and the changeless frost :
Woe is me for my broken word !
Woe, woe's me for my bonny bird,
 My bird and the love-time lost !

Have ye forgotten the old keen life ?
 The hut with the skin-strewn floor ?
O winged white wife, and children three,
Is there no room left in your hearts for me,
 Or our home on the low sea-shore ?

Once the quarry was scarce and shy,
 Sharp hunger gnawed us sore,
My spoken oath was clean forgot,
My bow twanged thrice with a swift, straight shot,
 And slew me sea-gulls four.

The sun hung red on the sky's dull breast,
 The snow was wet and red ;
Her voice shrilled out in a woful cry,
She beat her long white arms on high
 The hour is here,' she said.

She beat her arms, and she cried full fain
As she swayed and wavered there.
'Fetch me the feathers, my children three.
Feathers and plumes for you and me,
Bonny grey wings to wear !'

They ran to her side, our children three,
With the plumage black and grey ;
Then she bent her down and drew them near,
She laid the plumes on our children dear,
'Mid the snow and the salt sea-spray.

'Babes of mine, of the wild wind's kin,
Feather ye quick, nor stay.
Oh, oho ! but the wild winds blow !
Babes of mine, it is time to go :
Up, dear hearts, and away !'

And lo ! the grey plumes covered them all,
Shoulder and breast and brow.
I felt the wind of their whirling flight :
Was it sea or sky ? was it day or night ?
It is always night-time now.

Dear, will you never relent, come back ?
I loved you long and true.
O winged white wife, and our children three,
Of the wild wind's kin though ye surely be,
Are ye not of my kin too ?

Ay, ye once were mine, and, till I forget,
Ye are mine forever and aye,
Mine, wherever your wild wings go,
While shrill winds whistle across the snow
And the skies are blear and grey.

II.—THE SMILE OF ALL-WISDOM.

SEEKING the Smile of All-Wisdom one wandered afar
(He that first fashioned the Sphinx, in the dust of
the past) :

Looked on the faces of sages, of heroes of war ;
Looked on the lips of the lords of the uttermost star,
Magi, and kings of the earth—nor had found it at last,

Save for the word of a slave, hoary-headed and weak,
Trembling, that clung to the hem of his garment, and
said,

‘ Master, the least of your servants has found what you
seek :

(Pardon, O Master, if all without wisdom I speak !)
Sculpture the smile of your Sphinx from the lips of the Dead !’

Rising, he followed the slave to a hovel anear ;

Lifted the mat from the doorway and looked on the bed.
Nay, thou hast spoken aright, thou hast nothing to fear :
That which I sought thou hast found, Friend ; for, lo, it
is here !—

Surely the Smile of the Sphinx is the Smile of the Dead !’

Aye, on the stone lips of old, on the clay of to-day,

Tranquil, inscrutable, sweet with a quiet disdain,
Lingers the Smile of All-Wisdom, still seeming to say,
‘ Fret not, O Friend, at the turmoil—it passeth away ;
Waste not the Now in the search of a Then that is vain :

‘ Hushed in the infinite dusk at the end shall ye be,

Feverish, questioning spirits that travail and yearn,
Quenched in the fulness of knowledge and peaceful as we :

Lo, we have lifted the veil—there was nothing to see !
Lo, we have looked on the scroll—there was nothing to
learn !’

SONNETS.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

I.—AN INTERLUDE.

SIGHING she spoke, and leaning clasped her knees ;—
‘Well hast thou sung of living men and dead,
Of fair deeds done, and far lands visited.
Sing now of things more marvellous than these !
Of fruits ungathered on unplanted trees,
Of songs unsung, of gracious words unsaid,
Of that dim shore where no man’s foot may tread
Of strangest skies, and unbeholden seas !
‘Full many a golden web our longings spin,
And days are fair, and sleep is over-sweet ;
But passing sweet those moments rare and fleet,
When red spring sunlight, tremulous and thin,
Makes quick the pulses with tumultuous beat
For meadows never won, or wandered in.’

II.—OMAR KHAYYÁM.

To A. L.

SAYER of sooth, and Searcher of dim skies !
Lover of Song, and Sun, and Summertime,
For whom so many roses bloomed and died ;
Tender Interpreter, most sadly wise,
Of earth’s dumb, inarticulated cries !
Time’s self cannot estrange us, nor divide ;
Thy hand still beckons from the garden-side,
Through green vine-garlands, when the Winter dies.
Thy calm lips smile on us, thine eyes are wet ;
The nightingale’s full song sobs all through thine,
And thine in hers,—part human, part divine !
Among the deathless gods thy place is set,
All-wise, but drowsy with Life’s mingled Wine,
Laughter and Learning, Passion and Regret.

III.—BLIND MAN'S HOLIDAY.

WHEN vanished is the gold and violet,
And all the pearl and opal turned to grey,
We call the drowsy children from their play.
'Come, bonny birds, to roost ; the sun has set !'
And still they cry, ' We are not sleepy yet ;
Only a little longer may we stay—
Only a little while ? ' half-sighing say ;
' We were so still, we hoped you might forget.'

We, too, delay, with childish stratagem,
The while we break our playthings one by one,
Sobbing our foolish hearts out over them ;
Till comes the wise nurse Death, at set of sun,
When, wearied out and piteous, we run
Weeping to her and clasp her garments' hem.

IV.—HEREAFTER.

SHALL we not weary in the windless days
Hereafter, for the murmur of the sea,
The cool salt air across some grassy lea ?
Shall we not go bewildered through a maze
Of stately streets with glittering gems ablaze,
Forlorn amid the pearl and ivory,
Straining our eyes beyond the bourne to see
Phantoms from out Life's dear, forsaken ways ?

Give us again the crazy clay-built nest,
Summer, and soft unseasonable spring,
Our flowers to pluck, our broken songs to sing,
Our fairy gold of evening in the West ;
Still to the land we love our longings cling,
The sweet, vain world of turmoil and unrest.

A SUMMER NIGHT AND OTHER POEMS.

1891.

GRAHAM R. TOMSON.

I.—A SUMMER NIGHT.

*'Le vent qui vient à travers la montagne
Me rendra fou.'*

THE linden leaves are wet,
The gas-lights flare—
Deep yellow jewels set
In dusky air,
In dim air subtly sweet
With vanished rain.

Hush!—from the distant street
Again—again—
Life's music swells and falls,
Despairing—light—
Beyond my garden walls
This summer night.

Where do you call me, where?
O voice that cries!
O murky evening air,
What Paradise,
Unsought, unfound, unknown
Inviteth me,
With faint night-odours blown?
With murmurous plea?

Future art thou, or Past ?
Hope, or Regret ?
My heart throbs thick and fast,
Mine eyes are wet,
For well and well I know
Thou hast no share,
Nor hence, nor long ago,
Nor anywhere.

II.—TWO SONGS.

THE sun is gone from the valleys,
The air breathes fresh and chill ;
On the barn-roof yellow with lichen
A robin is singing shrill.

Like a tawny leaf is his bosom,
Like a dead leaf is his wing ;
He is glad of the coming winter
As the thrush is glad of the spring.

The sound of a shepherd's piping
Comes down from a distant fold,
Like the ripple of running water,
As tuneless, and sweet, and cold.

The two songs mingle together ;
Like and unlike are they,
For one sounds tired and plaintive,
And one rings proud and gay.

They take no thought of their music,
The bird and the shepherd lad ;
But the bird-voice thrills with rapture,
And the human note is sad.

III.—IN THE RAIN.

RAIN in the glimmering street—
 R Murmurous, rhythmical beat ;
 Shadows that flicker and fly ;
 Blue of wet road, of wet sky,
 (Grey in the depths and the heights) ;
 Orange of numberless lights,
 Shapes fleeting on, going by.

Figures, fantastical, grim—
 Figures, prosaical, tame,
 Each with chameleon-stain,
 Dun in the crepuscle dim,
 Red in the nimbus of flame—
 Glance through the veil of the rain.
 Rain in the measureless street—
 Vistas of orange and blue ;
 Music of echoing feet,
 Pausing, and pacing anew.

Rain, and the clamour of wheels,
 Splendour, and shadow, and sound ;
 Coloured confusion that reels
 Lost in the twilight around.

* * * * *

When I lie hid from the light,
 Stark, with the turf overhead,
 Still, on a rainy Spring night,
 I shall come back from the dead.

Turn then and look for me here
 Stealing the shadows along ;
 Look for me—I shall be near,
 Deep in the heart of the throng :
 Here, where the current runs rife,
 Careless, and doleful, and gay,

Moving, and motley, and strong,
 Good in its sport, in its strife.

* * * * *

Ah, might I be—might I stay—
 Only for ever and aye,
 Living and looking on life !

IV.—CHIMÆRA.

THE yellow light of an opal
 On the white-walled houses dies
 The roadway beyond my garden
 It glimmers with golden eyes.

Alone in the faint spring twilight,
 The crepuscle vague and blue,
 Every beat of my pulses
 Is quickened by dreams of you.

You whom I know and know not
 You come as you came before
 Here, in the misty quiet,
 I greet you again once more.

Welcome, O best belovèd—
 Life of my life—for lo !
 All that I ask you promise,
 All that I seek you know.

The dim grass stirs with your footstep,
 The blue dusk throbs with your smile.
 I and the world of glory
 Are one for a little while.

* * * * *

The spring sun shows me your shadow,
 The spring wind bears me your breath,
 You are mine for a passing moment,
 But I am yours to the death.

Norman Gale.

1862.

NORMAN GALE, the author of "A Country Muse," was born at Kew, Surrey, on the 4th of March, 1862. His earlier work in prose and verse was printed privately in small volumes which only gained, and indeed only appealed to, a small audience. One of these, however, "Violets," a little book of verse, received warm welcome from the *Athenæum*, and Mr. Gale was encouraged to appeal to a wider circle. "A Country Muse" appeared in 1892, and few volumes of verse from previously unknown writers have received a more unanimously praiseful greeting. This was followed, in 1893, by "A Country Muse: New Series," which had a no less hearty welcome; and though the instant success of these volumes was unusual it cannot be regarded as surprising. In them Mr. Gale adds to the grace, fluency, and melody common to many of his contemporaries, the individuality which is always so rare,—the individuality of a new way of seeing and feeling things, associated with a new, arresting rendering of the vision and the sensibility. Mr. Gale's volumes are aptly named, for he is really inspired by the country Muse. His is not, strictly speaking, nature poetry,—the poetry which celebrates the charm of wood and mountain and meadow as that charm is felt by one who *comes* to them and is made musically vocal by the sudden rapture of their

beauty ; it is *rural* poetry, the simple unpremeditated song of one who is at home in the fields and between the hedgerows, who is an intimate of the milkmaid and the blackbird, who does not elaborately describe, after the manner of the nature-poet, because the themes of his song are not outside of him as subjects : they are his life, and he sings *them* when he expresses *himself*. Mr. Gale has been compared to Herrick ; and there is indeed much of the Herrick quality in his verse, though he inevitably wears his buttercups with a difference. He is singularly happy in his instinctively graceful rendering of delight in the sweet simplicities of nature and of that human life which is lived close to nature,—especially the life of rustic youth or maiden just becoming shyly conscious of the instincts of dawning manhood and womanhood. Spring, wild-flowers, birds, and the love of rustic lovers,—these are Mr. Gale's inspirations, and the verse inspired by them has the freshness, the simplicity, and the gusto which their pleasant burdens demand. No critic could better describe his work than he himself describes it in the winning "Apology," with which his second volume opens :—

- "Chide not if here you haply find
The rough romance of country love ;
I sing as well the brook and wind,
The green below, the blue above.
- "Here shall you read of spreading cress,
The velvet of the sparrow's neck ;
Sometimes shall glance the glowing tress,
And Laura's snow without a speck ;
- "The crab that sets the mouth awry,
The chestnut with its domes of pink ;
The splendid palace of the sky,
The pool where drowsy cattle drink ;

- “The stack where Colin hides to catch
The milkmaid with her beaded load ;
The singing lark, a poet’s match,
That travels up the great blue road ;
“The cherry whence the blackbird bold
Steals ruby mouthfuls at his ease ;
The glory of laburnum-gold,
The valiant piping of the breeze ;—
“All, all are here. The rustic muse
Shall sing the pansy and the thrush.
Ah, chide not if she sometimes choose
The country love, the country blush !”

This combination of the two motives of nature and love is characteristic of Mr. Gale. He feels the charm of nature pure and simple, but he always adds the more intimate charm given by the presence of vivid life—life made vivid by some touch of fine emotion. It may be only the loving care of a mother-bird for her callow brood, but more often it is the human passion which is the soul of our sweetest lyrical song, as in “A Country Dance,” “A Pastoral,” “An Unfinished Picture.” Mr. Gale’s country Muse is true to herself, and will not, by choice, leave her fields and lanes to gad about the town; but when driven there by tender compassion for her friend the thrush, imprisoned in Seven Dials, she brings into the “din of smoke and filthy” a breath of the clear and wholesome air, and even the poor thrush recognises her presence, and ignores her cage:—

- “But sometimes stirred to quite forget
The crime of her captivity,
The songster o’er the city’s fret
Flung strains of bird-divinity,
And tried to stretch her tattered wings,
And poise above the constant perch,
And answered the imaginings
Of sparrows on the murky church.

“She marvelled much that they so small,
So scant of music, plainly drest,
Should swoop at will from wall to wall,
While she, whose melody and breast
Had fluttered whitethroats in the wood,
Should hang upon a rusty nail,
And chirp to great-eyed boys who stood
To hear her sing in rain or hail.”

The feminine pronouns used for a singing-bird supply an unexpected proof that Mr. Gale is not quite impeccable, and other proofs may be found here and there by the critical reader. These, however, are details of little account, which enable the critic to give himself airs of superiority, but are powerless to mar the enjoyment of the true lover of poetry. The verse of Mr. Gale, perhaps more truly and constantly than the verse of any of our younger living poets, stands the Miltonic test of poetry, in proving itself “simple, sensuous, passionate.” Its sensuous quality is very obvious, but it is becoming more and more necessary to distinguish between the sensuousness of healthy living, and that other sensuousness—not to call it by a worse name—of indolent unwholesome brooding. There are morbidities of asceticism as well as of its opposite, and if Professor Seeley be right in saying “no heart is pure that is not passionate,” we may well expect to find the surest evidence of healthful purity in work rich in instinctive natural passion. Mr. Gale’s sensuousness is indeed always charged with a tender sentiment, a fine fancy which brings it from the region of mere sense into the region of imagination.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

A COUNTRY MUSE.

(FIRST SERIES, 1892.)

NORMAN GALE.

I.—A SONG.

I WILL not say my true love's eyes
Outshine the noblest star ;
But in their depth of lustre lies
My peace, my truce, my war.

I will not say upon her neck
Is white to shame the snow ;
For if her bosom hath a speck
I would not have it go.

My love is as a woman sweet,
And as a woman white ;
Who's more than this is more than meet
For me and my delight.

II.—LABORE CONFECTO.

AH God, how good and sweet it is
To have so fair a rest
For such a weary, weary head,
On such a white, white breast !

Ah me ! how sweet and good it is
To leave the city's lamps,
Its multitude of merchant-men,
Its multitude of tramps.

To find the children eager-eyed,
Expectant of my tread—
Bright little angels scanty robed
In readiness for bed !—

To hear the music of a voice
That welcomes me at night ;
To see within her eyes of love
A rare and sudden light !—

To watch the youngest at her heart,
And hear with ecstasy
His uncouth dialect of joy
When calling out to me !

The finest language lacking words
The world has ever had !
And how the spirit answers it !
And how the soul is glad !

Peace, peace indeed, with labour done !
The babies kissed to sleep,
To hear the household chronicles—
What made the children weep ;

What dandelions grew beside
The dock-plants in the lanes ;
How Baby puckered up his face
At stinging-nettle pains !

Peace, peace indeed, and then to sit
Beside my Love's low chair,
And sometimes feel her hand—sometimes
Her lips upon my hair !

And bliss it is returning late,
To see her, half-divine,
Calm as a statue-saint, asleep,
And think—*This angel's mine.*

Gold, pink and snow in one she lies
Toward my vacant place,
As if she hoped when she awoke
At once to find my face.

Ah God, how good and sweet it is
To have so fair a rest
For such a weary, weary head,
On such a white, white breast !

(SECOND SERIES, 1893.)

III.—SPRING.

ALL the lanes are lyric,
All the bushes sing ;
You are at your kissing,
Spring !

Romping with thy children,
• Do not fail to bring
Mary to the haystack,
Spring !

Froth upon her fingers,
Bosom for a king,
Speed her from the milking,
Spring !

IV.—A PASTORAL.

ALONG the lane beside the mead
Where cowslip-gold is in the grass
I matched the milkmaid's easy speed,
A tall and springing country lass :
But though she had a merry plan
To shield her from my soft replies,
Love played at Catch-me-if-you-Can
In Mary's eyes.

A mile or twain from Varley Bridge
I plucked a dock-leaf for a fan,
And drove away the constant midge,
And cooled her forehead's strip of tan.
But though the maiden would not spare
My hand her pretty finger-tips,
Love played at Kiss-me-if-you-Dare
On Mary's lips.

And now the village flashed in sight,
And closer came I to her side ;
A flush ran down into the white,
The impulse of a pinky tide :
And though her face was turned away,
How much her panting heart confessed,
Love played at Find-me-if-you-May
In Mary's breast.

V.—THE INVITATION.

COME, thrushes, blackcaps, redpolls, all
To eat my Laura's bounty !
There's not a sweetheart treats you so
In all this leafy County.
Yes, sparrows too ! for God forbid
That here in bloom and grasses
My Love and I should rank you birds
In low and upper classes !
Both large and little, russet, bright,
I call at Laura's asking ;
And we shall watch you at your feast,
Upon the greensward basking :
But this must first be understood
By stronger beaks most fully—
All sweet content ; and, blackbird, Sir,
Remember not to bully !

Look down these lovely cherry-aisles
At fruit by bills unfretted,
A million globes of red and white
The gardener closely netted;
For, pirates of the air, your troops
To storm the orchard muster,
And woe betide the ripest fruit,
And woe the scarlet cluster !

My Sweetheart pressed me yesterday
To give you of our plenty ;
She begged one glowing tree for you
From out this line of twenty ;
O birds, her cherry mouth more fair
Than ever painter figured,
Could make me prodigal of gold
Had I been born a niggard !

God gave me with a willing hand
A share of sky and mountain,
And time to idle in the grass
And dream beside the fountain :
He gave me angels for my house,
A wife, a rosy darling—
I pay my tithe to Him through you,
O linnet, finch and starling !

As statues in a town are draped
Before their great unveiling,
So did we net this cherry-tree
Before your bills assailing :
And Laura's is the lovely hand
That frees her shining bounty ;
Fall to, O birds ! and praise her name
Through all this leafy County !

VI.—THE SHADED POOL.

A LAUGHING knot of village maids
Goes gaily tripping to the brook,
For water-nymphs they mean to be,
And seek some still, secluded nook.
Here Laura goes, my own delight,
And Colin's love, the madcap Jane,
And half a score of goddesses
Trip over daisies in the plain:
Already now they loose their hair
And peep from out the tangled gold,
Or speed the flying foot to reach
The brook that's only summer-cold;
The lovely locks stream out behind
The shepherdesses on the wing,
And Laura's is the wealth I love,
And Laura's is the gold I sing.

A row upon the bank they pant,
And all unlace the country shoe;
Their fingers tug the garter-knots
To loose the hose of varied hue.
The flashing knee at last appears,
The lower curves of youth and grace,
Whereat the maidens' eyes do scan
The mazy thickets of the place.
But who's to see besides the thrush
Upon the wild crab-apple tree?
Within his branchy haunt he sits—
A very Peeping Tom is he!
Now music bubbles in his throat,
And now he pipes the scene in song—
The virgins slipping from their robes
The cheated stockings, lean and long

The swift-descending petticoat,
The breasts that heave because they ran,
The rounded arms, the brilliant limbs,
The pretty necklaces of tan.
Did ever amorous god in Greece,
In search of some young mouth to kiss
By any river chance upon
A sylvan scene as bright as this ?
But though each maid is pure and fair,
For one alone my heart I bring,
And Laura's is the shape I love,
And Laura's is the snow I sing.

And now upon the brook's green brink
A milk-white bevy, lo, they stand,
Half shy, half frightened, reaching back
The beauty of a poisoning hand !
How musical their little screams
When ripples kiss their shrinking feet !
And then the brook embraces all
The undraped girls so wonder-sweet.
Within the water's soft cool arms
Delight and love and gracefulness
Sport till a horde of tiny waves
Swamps all the beds of floating cress
And on his shining face are seen
Great yellow lilies drifting down
Beyond the ringing apple-tree,
Beyond the empty homespun gown.
Did ever Orpheus with his lute
When making melody of old,
E'er find a stream in Attica
So ripely full of pink and gold ?

At last they climb the sloping bank
And shake upon the thirsty soil
A treasury of diamond-drops
Not gained by aught of grimy toil
Again the garters clasp the hose,
Again the polished knee is hid,
Again the breathless babble tells
What Colin said, what Colin did.
In grace upon the grass they lie
And spread their tresses to the sun.
And rival, musical as they,
The blackbird's alto shake and run.
Did ever Love, on hunting bent,
Come idly humming through the hay,
And, to his sudden joyfulness,
Find fairer game at close of day?
Though every maid's a lily-rose,
And meet to sway a sceptred king,
Yet Laura's is the face I love,
And Laura's are the lips I sing.

Richard le Gallienne.

1865

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE, a member of a Channel Islands family, was born in Birkenhead in the year 1865. He received his education at the Liverpool College, and at the age of sixteen entered upon business life. Literature, however, and especially the literature of verse, drew him from "the desk's hard wood," and made him not merely rhymers but bibliophile; and his earliest volume of verse, "My Ladies' Sonnets, and other 'vain and amatorious' verses, with some of graver mood," privately printed in 1887, was an utterance of the two ardours of his adolescence, love and book-love. This book was succeeded in 1889 by "Volumes in Folio," in which again the bookman and the poet were both in evidence. Prose was the vehicle chosen for Mr. le Gallienne's next volume, "George Meredith: Some Characteristics" (1890), which consisted of a series of essays in celebration of the genius of the well-known novelist and poet. In 1891 followed "The Book-bills of Narcissus," a volume of imaginative prose, which perhaps did more than any of its author's previous work to make fully manifest the nature and scope of his endowment. "My Ladies' Sonnets," and "Volumes in Folio" had been dainty and delicate; the essays on Mr. Meredith's work had been rich in cleverness;

but "Narcissus," in addition to its charms of form and style, has a rich flesh-and-blood humanity, a *naïf* and winning self-revelation which gives it the fascination belonging to books which are not merely admirable,* but lovable as well. Mr. le Gallienne's next volume of verse, "English Poems," appeared in 1892, and in the following year he edited a reprint of that curious and scarce book, the "*Liber Amoris*" of William Hazlitt.

The promise of distinction in the verse of Mr. le Gallienne is made evident by the individuality of the work, by the manifest versatility of the worker, and by the indications provided in every succeeding volume of the poet's capacity for self-criticism and growth. "My Ladies' Sonnets" gave evidence of that individuality which is essential to survival in the struggle for existence, and though crudities of thought, emotion, and expression were certainly to be found, they were not frequent; on the contrary, there was a general firmness and assurance in the handling—a lightness and yet precision of touch, both in the gayer and the graver measures, which witnessed to aptitude in an art not less than to visitation of an impulse. The poems in this first volume were, however, necessarily tentative in character. There was occasionally power, as in the sombre "*Quelle heure est-il?*" often a fine seriousness, as in the sonnet "To My Mother," or a wealth of pleasant fancy, as in "The Bookman's Avalon"; and always a winning daintiness and grace; but there was in many of the sonnets and lyrics a falling short of final perfectness of rendering, which, in work so substantially good, would have been irritating had it not been inevit-

able. How rapid was the poet's progress towards such command may be inferred from the captivating numbers of "Love among the Folios," where the two ardours above referred to find an expression which leaves behind it no sense of dissatisfaction. This volume may perhaps be most conveniently sampled by the sonnet "Confessio Amantis":—

"When do I love you most, sweet books of mine?
In strenuous morns when o'er your leaves I pore,
Austerely bent to win austerest lore,
Forgetting how the dewy meadows shine;
Or afternoons when honeysuckles twine
About the seat, and to some dreamy shore
Of old Romance, where lovers evermore
Keep blissful hours, I follow at your sign?
Yes, ye are precious then, but most to me
Ere lamplight dawneth, when low croons the fire
To whispering twilight in my little room,
And eyes read not, but sitting silently
I feel your great hearts throbbing deep in quire,
And hear you breathing round me in the gloom."

The volume "English Poems" provides the material for a more adequate estimate of Mr. le Gallienne's achievement than can be based on his preceding work. In it the imaginative range has widened, the body of thought and emotion has matured, and an added mastery of expression has brought substance and form into more vital union. Perhaps there may be a somewhat undue preponderance of one of the poet's favourite themes; and one can hardly resist the conviction that the volume would be more strong if it were less cloyingly sweet. Still, no one will deny that it is the richer for the inclusion of the poems "To My Wife, Mildred," "Parables," "The Wonder-Child," and "Juliet and her Romeo," with its charming conceit,—

"Is not Verona warm within thy gown,
And Mantua all the world save where thou art?"

Of the poet's power of imaginative pictorialism the verses on "Sunset in the City" are a fine example:—

"Above the town a monstrous wheel is turning
With glowing spokes of red,
Low in the west its fiery axle burning;
And, lost amid the spaces overhead.
A vague white moth the moon is fluttering.
Above the town an azure sea is flowing,
'Mid long peninsulas of shining sand,
From opal unto pearl the moon is growing
Dropped like a shell upon the changing strand.
Within the town the streets grow strange and haunted,
And dark against the western lakes of green,
The buildings change to temples, and unwonted
Shadows and sounds creep in where day has been.
Within the town the lamps of sin are flaring,
Poor foolish men that know not what ye are!
Tired traffic still upon his feet is faring—
Two lovers meet and kiss and watch a star."

Here, and still more noticeably in the powerful poems, "Death in a London Lodging" and "The Décadent to his Soul," Mr. le Gallienne deals adequately with themes of larger interest than that which belongs to any merely personal utterance. These verses give to the volume of "English Poems" a vigour and virility which it would have lacked had they been absent; and the sonnet on "Matthew Arnold," with its illuminating characterisation of

"That song which sang of sight, and yet was brave
To lay the ghosts of seeing,"

proves that Mr. le Gallienne can, on fit occasion, make his verse the vehicle, not only of sweetness, but of light.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE.

MY LADIES' SONNETS.

1887.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

I.—TO MY MOTHER.

SWEET Mother, I did long to sing for thee
A birthday song, but somehow from my throat,
When I essayed, died out the struggling note,
O'erburdened with the weight of sympathy.
So easy has it ever seemed to me
To pen a sonnet to my lady's look,
Or write a verse in some confession-book,
That it seemed strange I had no song for thee ;
And yet none such has come, although I strove
Long time for music : now I know at length
Why so this is, for as a mother's love
Is sacrest of all, so must the strength
To sing it be the strongest—thus in vain I long
Till that strength comes to sing "my mother's song."

II.—"QUELLE HEURE EST-IL?"

"QUELLE heure est-il ?"
How sweet the sad words ring,
As though they spoke of some glad welcoming ;
And yet no knife of subtly-poisoned steel
More cruel is than thy "Quelle heure est-il ?"
"Quelle heure est-il ?"
Why the dread answer seek ?
Why force my lips th' unwilling words to speak ?
When round our feet the sunny waters steal,
Why still the question ask, "Quelle heure est-il ?"
"Quelle heure est-il ?"
Time is it, O my love,
To leave the sea-lulled silence of this cove ;

Time for sad kiss a long farewell to seal ;
Thus must I answer thy "Quelle heure est-il ?"

"Quelle heure est-il ?"

And must those words again
Turn all our joy to solitary pain ?

Ah ! darling, yes ! and how much harder still
The answer now to thy "Quelle heure est-il ?"

"Quelle heure est-il ?"

Time is it, O ! my bliss,
To part for ever ; one mad, maddening kiss,
Then ne'er again thy soft caress to feel ;
O ! God, why ask me then "Quelle heure est-il ?"

"Quelle heure est-il ?"

Again, though all alone,
I hear thy voice like some melodious moan ;
But should I not, my love, from thee conceal
My last sad answer to "Quelle heure est-il ?"

"Quelle heure est-il ?"

Time is it, O ! my God,
To sink to sleep within the restful sod.
Sweet love is dead, why therefore should I feel
Terror to answer thus, "Quelle heure est-il ?"

"Quelle heure est-il ?"

O ! would that I could cry,
"Time dawns at last, my love, when you and I
May ever mingle in love's holy thrill"—
O ! what blest answer to "Quelle heure est-il ?"

"Quelle heure est-il ?"

The hour is not yet come,
But sure it waits in some far spirit-home,
Then, as in joy of rapturous praise we kneel,
How sweet the question, love, "Quelle heure est-il ?"

ENGLISH POEMS.

1892.

RICHARD LE GALLIENNE.

I. -TO MY WIFE, MILDRED.

(October 22, 1891.)

DEAR wife, there is no word in all my songs
But unto thee belongs :

Though I indeed before our true day came
Mistook thy star in many a wandering flame,
Singing to thee in many a fair disguise,
Calling to thee in many another's name,
Before I knew thine everlasting eyes.

Faces that fled me like a hunted fawn
I followed singing, deeming it was Thou,
Seeking this face that on our pillow now
Glimmers behind thy golden hair like dawn,
And, like a setting moon, within my breast
Sinks down each night to rest.

Moon follows moon before the great moon flowers,
Moon of the wild, wild honey that is ours ;
Long must the tree strive up in leaf and root,
Before it bear the golden-hearted fruit :
And shall great Love, at once perfected spring,
Nor grow by steps like any other thing ?
The lawless love that would not be denied,
The love that waited, and in waiting died,
The love that met and mated, satisfied.

Ah, love, 'twas good to climb forbidden walls,
Who would not follow where his Juliet calls ?
'Twas good to try and love the angel's way,
With starry souls untainted of the clay ;
But best the love where earth and heaven meet,
The god made flesh and dwelling in us, Sweet.

II.—WITH SOME OLD LOVE VERSES.

DEAR Heart, this is my book of boyish song,
 The changing story of the wandering quest
 That found at last its ending in thy breast—
 The love it sought and sang astray so long
 With wild young heart and happy eager tongue.
 Much meant it all to me to seek and sing,
 Ah, Love, but how much more to-day, to bring
 This 'rhyme that first of all he made when young.'
 Take it and love it, 'tis the prophecy
 For whose poor silver thou hast given me gold;
 Yea! those old faces for an hour seemed fair
 Only because some hints of Thee they were:
 Judge then, if I so loved weak types of old,
 How good, dear Heart, the perfect gift of Thee.

III.—THE WONDER-CHILD.

'OUR little babe,' each said, 'shall be
 Like unto thee'—'Like unto *thee*!'
 'Her mother's'—'Nay, his father's'—'eyes,'
 'Dear curls like thine'—but each replies,
 'As thine, all thine, and nought of me.'

What sweet solemnity to see
 The little life upon thy knee,
 And whisper as so soft it lies,—
 'Our little babe!'

For whether it be he or she,
 A David or a Dorothy,
 'As mother fair,' or 'father wise,'
 Both when it's 'good,' and when it cries,
 One thing is certain,—it will be
 Our little babe.

IV.—AD CIMMERIOS.

(WRITTEN FOR "SANTA LUCIA," A MAGAZINE FOR THE BLIND.,

WE, deeming daylight fair, and loving well
 Its forms and dyes, and all the motley play
 Of lives that win their colour from the day,
 Are fain some wonder of it all to tell
 To you that in that elder kingdom dwell
 Of Ancient Night, and thus we make essay
 Day to translate to Darkness, so to say,
 To talk Cimmerian for a little spell.
 Yet, as we write, may we not doubt lest ye
 Should smile on us, as once our fathers smiled,
 When we made vaunt of joys they knew no more;
 Knowing great dreams young eyes can never see,
 Dwelling in peace unguessed of any child—
 Will ye smile thus upon our daylight lore?

V.—WHAT OF THE DARKNESS?

WHAT of the Darkness? Is it very fair?
 Are there great calms, and find ye silence there?
 Like soft-shut lilies all your faces glow
 With some strange peace our faces never know,
 With some great faith our faces never dare.
 Dwells it in Darkness? Do ye find it there?
 Is it a bosom where tired heads may lie?
 Is it a mouth to kiss our weeping dry?
 Is it a hand to still the pulse's leap?
 Is it a voice that holds the runes of sleep?
 Day shows us not such comfort anywhere.
 Dwells it in Darkness? Do ye find it there?
 Out of the Day's deceiving light we call,
 Day that shows man so great and God so small,
 That hides the stars and magnifies the grass;
 Oh is the Darkness too a lying glass;

Or, undistracted, do ye find truth there ?
What of the Darkness ? Is it very fair ?

VI.—JULIET AND HER ROMEO.

(WITH MR. DICKSEE'S PICTURE.)

TAKE 'this of Juliet and her Romeo,'
Dear Heart of mine, for though yon budding sky
Yearns o'er Verona, and so long ago
That kiss was kissed, yet surely Thou and I,
Surely it is, whom morning tears apart,
As ruthless men tear tendrilled ivy down :
Is not Verona warm within thy gown,
And Mantua all the world save where thou art ?
O happy grace of lovers of old time,
Living to love like gods, and, dead, to live
Symbols and saints for us who follow them ;
Even bitter Death must sweets to lovers give :
See how they wear their tears for diadem,
Throned on the star of an unshaken rhyme.

VII.—MATTHEW ARNOLD.

(Died April 15, 1888.)

WITHIN that wood where thine own scholar strays,
O ! Poet, thou art passed, and at its bound,
Hollow and sere, we cry, yet win no sound
But the dark muttering of the forest maze
We may not tread, nor pierce with any gaze ;
And hardly love dare whisper thou hast found
That restful moonlit slope of pastoral ground
Set in dark dingles of the songful ways.
Gone ! they have called our shepherd from the hill,
Passed is the sunny sadness of his song,
That song which sang of sight and yet was brave
To lay the ghosts of seeing, subtly strong
To wean from tears and from the troughs to save ;
And who shall teach us now that he is still ?

Rudyard Kipling.

1865.

FEW men have come more rapidly to the front in the world of letters during the past few years than Mr. Rudyard Kipling. Born in Bombay towards the end of December 1865, Mr. Kipling appears to have had exceptional opportunities of studying native life, as he certainly has exceptional powers for its vivid portrayal. His earliest writings found publicity in the columns of Indian local papers; his first volume of verse being "*Departmental Ditties*," published in 1886, which was followed by his first prose book, "*Plain Tales from the Hills*," issued in 1888. This year was one of much publishing, for the "*Plain Tales*" were followed by "*Soldiers Three*," "*The Gadsbys*," "*In Black and White*," "*Under the Deodars*," "*The Phantom Rickshaw*," and "*Wee Willie Winkie*," all short stories, but all touched with the magic of newness which always wins way. In 1889 he came to England, and since then has published numerous stories in serial and volume form, and, what is more to our purpose here, his "*Barrack Room Ballads*," and other verses, first published in book-form in America in 1891, and reprinted here in 1893. "*The Departmental Ditties*" have had enormous popularity, many editions having been called for and supplied. They are humorous and satirical sketches of Anglo-Indian life, two of which

we are able to quote, "The Story of Uriah" (p. 655), and "The Galley-Slave" (p. 656). The former deals with a subject often treated in these ditties, and the latter is an allegorical description of the Indian Civil Service. Much stronger from the poetic point of view is Mr. Kipling's second volume of verse, "Barrack Room Ballads," in which he adds to the magic of newness the witchery of numbers. The irresistible music of "Mandalay" shows a mastery of melody which may achieve almost anything in rhythmic movement.

"By the old Moulmein Pagoda, lookin' eastward to the
 sea,
There's a Burma girl a settin' and I know she thinks o'
 me;
For the wind is in the palm-trees, and the temple bells
 they say:
Come you back, you British Soldier: come you back to
 Mandalay!
 Come you back to Mandalay
 Where the old Flotilla lay:
Can't you 'ear their paddles chunkin' from Rangoon
 to Mandalay?
On the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
An' the dawn comes up like thunder outer China
 'cross the Bay.

"'Er petticoat was yaller, an' 'er little cap was green,
An' 'er name was Supi-yaw-lat—jes' the same as Thee-
 baw's queen.
An' I seed her first a-smokin' of a whackin' white cheroot,
An' a wastin' Christian kisses on an 'eathen idol's foot:
 Bloomin' idol made o' mud,
 What they called the Great Gawd Budd—
Plucky lot she cared for Idols when I kissed 'er
 where she stud:
On the road to Mandalay.

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“ Ship me somewheres east of Suez, where the best is like
the worst,
Where there aren't no Ten Commandments, an' a man can
raise a thirst;
For the temple bells are callin', an' it's there that I would
be—
By the old Moulmein Pagoda, looking lazy at the sea;
On the road to Mandalay
Where the old Flotilla lay,
With our sick beneath the awnings when we went
to Mandalay!
O the road to Mandalay,
Where the flyin'-fishes play,
And the dawn comes up like thunder outer China
'crost the Bay.”

The “Barrack Room Ballads” moreover display other qualities in fuller development than is shown by the “Departmental Ditties.” “Fuzzy Wuzzy,” given on p. 661, is an excellent example of Mr. Kipling's humour, or rather of his perception of the humorous side of things. The Soudanese warrior is not exactly a character to be laughed at, nor would the British soldier who has danced the dance of death with him think of treating him with levity; and yet, after reading the following lines, it is impossible to deny that there is a humorous side even to Fuzzy Wuzzy's ferocity.

“ 'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive;
An' before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ed;
'E's all 'ot sand and ginger when alive,
And 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.”

The other poems in the volume show the writer to be widening in his range, as well as strengthening in his form. One cannot help but think that such a ballad as “The Ballad of East and West” (p. 665), is a genuine addition to our ballad literature; and one

cannot but welcome the healthy manly spirit that breathes through it and that finds expression in such other ballads as "The English Flag":—

"Winds of the world give answer! They are whimpering
to and fro—
And what should they know of England who only
England know?—
The poor little street-bred people that vapour and fume
and brag,
They are lifting their heads in the stillness to yelp at the
English flag."

The "Ballad of the Bolivar" is another of Mr. Kipling's triumphs in musical measures, and as a sailor's retrospect may take a natural place by the side of "Mandalay," the soldier's reminiscences. "The Conundrum of the Workshops" (p. 663), and "Tomlinson," are examples of other varieties of subject matter treated with the same virility and skill.

The future of Mr. Kipling in connection with literature it would be foolish to attempt to forecast; but considering the work he has already done, and the measure of life that he may reasonably be supposed to have before him, we are justified in hoping great things of him, and in feeling that he has but to remain true to himself and the culture of his art, and to resist the syren songs that seek to woo him to wander among the beaten tracks of journalism, in order to take a permanent place in the literature of the century.

ALFRED H. MILES.

DEPARTMENTAL DITTIES.

1886.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

I.—THE STORY OF URIAH.

"Now there were two men in one city; the one rich
and the other poor."

JACK BARRETT went to Quetta,
Because they told him to.
He left his wife at Simla
On three-fourths his monthly screw :
Jack Barrett died at Quetta
Ere the next month's pay he drew.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta,
He didn't understand
The reason of his transfer
From the pleasant mountain-land :
The season was September,
And it killed him out of hand.

Jack Barrett went to Quetta
And there gave up the ghost,
Attempting two men's duty
In that very healthy post ;
And Mrs. Barrett mourned for him
Five lively months at most.

Jack Barrett's bones at Quetta
Enjoy profound repose ;
But I shouldn't be astonished
If *now* his spirit knows
The reason of his transfer
From the Himalayan snows.

And, when the Last Great Bugle Call
Adown the Hurnai throbs,
When the last grim joke is entered
In the big black Books of Jobs,
And Quetta's graveyards give again
Their victims to the air,
I shouldn't like to be the man
Who sent Jack Barrett there.

II.—THE GALLEY-SLAVE.

OH gallant was our galley from her carven steering-wheel
To her figurehead of silver and her beak of hammered
steel;

The leg-bar chafed the ankle and we gasped for cooler air,
But no galley on the water with our galley could compare!

Our bulkheads bulged with cotton, and our masts were
stepped in gold—

We ran a mighty merchandise of niggers in the hold;
The white foam spun behind us, and the black shark swam
below,

As we gripped the kicking sweep-head and we made that
galley go.

It was merry in the galley, for we revelled now and then—
If they wore us down like cattle, faith, we fought and
loved like men!

As we snatched her through the water so we snatched a
minute's bliss,

And the mutter of the dying never spoiled the lover's kiss.

Our women and our children toiled beside us in the dark—
They died, we filed their fetters, and we heaved them to
the shark—

We heaved them to the fishes, but so fast the galley sped
We had only time to envy, for we could not mourn our
dead.

Bear witness, once my comrades, what a hard-bit gang
were we—

The servants of the sweep-head, but the masters of the
sea !

By the hands that drove her forward as she plunged and
yawed and sheered,

Woman, Man, or God or Devil, was there anything we
feared ?

Was it storm ? Our fathers faced it, and a wilder never
blew ;

Earth that waited for the wreckage watched the galley
struggle through.

Burning noon or choking midnight, Sickness, Sorrow,
Parting, Death ?

Nay, our very babes would mock you had they time for
idle breath.

But to-day I leave the galley and another takes my place ;
There's my name upon the deck-beam—let it stand a little
space.

I am free—to watch my messmates beating out to open main
Free of all that Life can offer—save to handle sweep again.

By the brand upon my shoulder, by the gall of clinging steel,
By the welt the whips have left me, by the scars that
never heal ;

By eyes grown dim with staring through the sun-wash
on the brine,

I am paid in full for service—would that service still were
mine !

Yet they talk of times and seasons and of woe the years
bring forth,
Of our galley swamped and shattered in the rollers of the
North,
When the niggers break the hatches and the decks are
gay with gore,
And a craven-hearted pilot crams her crashing on the
shore.

She will need no half-mast signal, minute-gun, or rocket-
flare,
When the cry for help goes seaward, she will find her
servants there.
Battered chain-gangs of the orlop, grizzled drafts of years
gone by,
To the bench that broke their manhood, they shall lash
themselves and die.

Hale and crippled, young and aged, paid, deserted, shipped
away—
Palace, cot, and lazaretto shall make up the tale that day,
When the skies are black above them, and the decks ablaze
beneath,
And the top-men clear the raffle with their clasp-knives
in their teeth.

It may be that Fate will give me life and leave to row
once more—
Set some strong man free for fighting as I take awhile
his oar.
But to-day I leave the galley. Shall I curse her service
then?
God be thanked—whate'er comes after, I have lived and
toiled with Men.

BARRACK-ROOM BALLADS AND OTHER VERSES.

1893.

RUDYARD KIPLING.

I.—TOMMY.

I WENT into a public-'ouse to get a pint o' beer,
The publican 'e up an' sez, 'We serve no red-
coats here.'

The girls be'ind the bar they laughed an' giggled fit
to die,

I outs into the street again an' to myself sez I :

O it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
'Tommy, go away' ;

But it's 'Thank you, Mister Atkins,' when
the band begins to play,

The band begins to play, my boys, the band
begins to play,

O it's 'Thank you, Mister Atkins,' when the
band begins to play.

I went into a theatre as sober as could be,

They gave a drunk civilian room, but 'adn't none
for me ;

They sent me to the gallery or round the music-'alls,
But when it comes to fightin', Lord ! they'll shove
me in the stalls !

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
'Tommy, wait outside' ;

But it's 'Special train for Atkins' when the
trooper's on the tide,

The troopship's on the tide, my boys, the
troopship's on the tide,

O it's 'Special train for Atkins' when the
trooper's on the tide.

Yes, makin' mock o' uniforms that guard you while
you sleep
Is cheaper than them uniforms, an' they're starva-
tion cheap ;
An' hustlin' drunken soldiers when they're going
large a bit
Is five times better business than paradin' in full
kit.

Then it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
'Tommy, 'ow's yer soul ?'

But it's 'Thin red line of 'eroes' when the
drums begin to roll,

The drums begin to roll, my boys, the drums
begin to roll,

O it's 'Thin red line of 'eroes' when the
drums begin to roll.

We aren't no thin red 'eroes, nor we aren't no black-
guards too,

But single men in barracks, most remarkable like
you ;

An' if sometimes our conduct isn't all your fancy
paints,

Why, single men in barracks don't grow into plaster
saints ;

While it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
'Tommy, fall be'ind,'

But it's 'Please to walk in front, sir,' when
there's trouble in the wind,

There's trouble in the wind, my boys, there's
trouble in the wind,

O it's 'Please to walk in front, sir,' when
there's trouble in the wind.

You talk o' better food for us, an' schools, an' fires,
an' all :

We'll wait for extry rations if you treat us rational.
Don't mess about the cook-room slops, but prove it
to our face

The Widow's Uniform is not the soldier-man's disgrace.

For it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
'Chuck him out, the brute !'

But it's 'Saviour of 'is country' when the
guns begin to shoot ;

An' it's Tommy this, an' Tommy that, an'
anything you please ;

An' Tommy ain't a bloomin' fool—you bet
that Tommy sees !

II.—'FUZZY-WUZZY.'

(SOUDAN EXPEDITIONARY FORCE.)

WE'VE fought with many men acrost the seas,
An' some of 'em was brave an' some was not :

The Paythan an' the Zulu an' Burmese ;

But the Fuzzy was the finest o' the lot.

We never got a ha'porth's change of 'im :

'E squatted in the scrub an' 'ocked our 'orses,

'E cut our sentries up at *Suakin*,

An' 'e played the cat an' banjo with our forces.

So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome
in the Soudan ;

You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-
class fightin' man ;

We gives you your certificate, an' if you want
it signed

We'll come an' 'ave a romp with you when-
ever you're inclined.

We took our chanst among the Kyber 'ills,
The Boers knocked us silly at a mile,
The Burman give us Irriwaddy chills,
An' a Zulu *impi* dished us up in style :
But all we ever got from such as they
Was pop to what the Fuzzy made us swaller ;
We 'eld our bloomin' own, the papers say,
But man for man the Fuzzy knocked us 'oller.
Then 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' the
missis and the kid ;
Our orders was to break you, an' of course
we went an' did.
We sloshed you with Martinis, an' it wasn't
'ardly fair ;
But for all the odds agin' you, Fuzzy-Wuz,
you broke the square.

'E 'asn't got no papers of 'is own,
'E 'asn't got no medals nor rewards,
So we must certify the skill 'e's shown
In usin' of 'is long two-'anded swords :
When he's 'oppin' in an' out among the bush
With 'is coffin-'eaded shield an' shovel-spear,
An 'appy day with Fuzzy on the rush
Will last an 'ealthy Tommy for a year.
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, an' your
friends which are no more,
If we 'adn't lost some messmates we would
'elp you to deplore ;
But give an' take's the gospel, an' we'll call
the bargain fair,
For if you 'ave lost more than us, you
crumpled up the square !

'E rushes at the smoke when we let drive,
An', before we know, 'e's 'ackin' at our 'ead ;
'E's all 'ot sand an' ginger when alive,
An' 'e's generally shammin' when 'e's dead.
'E's a daisy, 'e's a ducky, 'e's a lamb !
'E's a injia-rubber idiot on the spree,
'E's the on'y thing that doesn't give a damn
For a Regiment o' British Infantee !
So 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, at your 'ome
in the Soudan ;
You're a pore benighted 'eathen but a first-
class fightin' man ;
An' 'ere's *to* you, Fuzzy-Wuzzy, with your
'ayrick 'ead of 'air—
You big black boundin' beggar—for you broke
a British square !

III.—THE CONUNDRUM OF THE WORKSHOPS.

WHEN the flush of a new-born sun fell first on
Eden's green and gold,
Our father Adam sat under the Tree and scratched
with a stick in the mould ;
And the first rude sketch that the world had seen
was joy to his mighty heart,
Till the Devil whispered behind the leaves, ' It's
pretty, but is it Art ?'
Wherefore he called to his wife, and fled to fashion
his work anew—
The first of his race who cared a fig for the first,
most dread review ;
And he left his lore to the use of his sons—and
that was a glorious gain
When the Devil chuckled ' Is it Art ?' in the ear
of the branded Cain.

They builded a tower to shiver the sky and wrench
the stars apart,
Till the Devil grunted behind the bricks : 'It's
striking, but is it Art ?'
The stone was dropped at the quarry-side and the
idle derrick swung,
While each man talked of the aims of Art, and each
in an alien tongue.

They fought and they talked in the North and the
South, they talked and they fought in the
West,
Till the waters rose on the pitiful land, and the
poor Red Clay had rest—
Had rest till the dank blank-canvas dawn when the
dove was preened to start,
And the Devil bubbled below the keel : 'It's
human, but is it Art ?'

The tale is as old as the Eden Tree—and new as
the new-cut tooth—
For each man knows ere his lip-thatch grows he is
master of Art and Truth ;
And each man hears as the twilight nears, to the
beat of his dying heart,
The Devil drum on the darkened pane : 'You did
it, but was it Art ?'

We have learned to whittle the Eden Tree to the
shape of a surplice-peg,
We have learned to bottle our parents twain in the
yolk of an addled egg,
We know that the tail must wag the dog, for the
horse is drawn by the cart ;
But the Devil whoops, as he whooped of old : 'It's
clever, but is it Art ?'

When the flicker of London sun falls faint on the Club-
room's green and gold,
The sons of Adam sit them down and scratch with their
pens in the mould—
They scratch with their pens in the mould of their graves,
and the ink and the anguish start,
For the Devil mutters behind the leaves : 'It's pretty,
but is it Art ?'

Now, if we could win to the Eden Tree where the Four
Great Rivers flow,
And the Wreath of Eve is red on the turf as she left it
long ago,
And if we could come when the sentry slept and softly
scurry through,
By the favour of God we might know as much—as our
father Adam knew.

VI.—BALLAD OF EAST AND WEST.

*OH, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain
shall meet,
Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment
Seat ;
But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor
Birth,
When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come
from the ends of the earth !*

Kamal is out with twenty men to raise the Borderside,
And he has lifted the Colonel's mare that is the Colonel's
pride :
He has lifted her out of the stable-door between the dawn
and the day,
And turned the calkins upon her feet, and ridden her far
away.

Then up and spoke the Colonel's son that led a troop
of the Guides :

'Is there never a man of all my men can say where Kamal
hides ?'

Then up and spoke Mahommed Khan, the son of the
Ressaldar :

'If ye know the track of the morning-mist, ye know where
his pickets are.

At dusk he harries the Abazai—at dawn he is into Bonair,
But he must go by Fort Bukloh to his own place to
fare,

So if ye gallop to Fort Bukloh as fast as a bird can fly,
By the favour of God ye may cut him off ere he win to
the Tongue of Jagai.

But if he be past the Tongue of Jagai, right swiftly turn
ye then,

For the length and the breadth of that grisly plain is sown
with Kamal's men.

There is rock to the left, and rock to the right, and low
lean thorn between,

And ye may hear a breech-bolt snick where never a man
is seen.'

The Colonel's son has taken a horse, and a raw rough
dun was he,

With the mouth of a bell and the heart of Hell and the
head of the gallows-tree.

The Colonel's son to the Fort has won, they bid him stay to
eat—

Who rides at the tail of a Border thief, he sits not long at
his meat.

He's up and away from Fort Bukloh as fast as he can
fly,

Till he was aware of his father's mare in the gut of the
Tongue of Jagai,

Till he was aware of his father's mare with Kamal upon
her back,

And when he could spy the white of her eye, he made
the pistol crack.

He has fired once, he has fired twice, but the whistling
ball went wide.

'Ye shoot look a soldier,' Kamal said. 'Show now if ye
can ride.'

It's up and over the Tongue of Jagai, as blown dust-devils go,
The dun he fled like a stag of ten, but the mare like a
barren doe.

The dun he leaned against the bit and slugged his head
above,

But the red mare played with the snaffle-bars, as a maiden
plays with a glove.

There was rock to the left, and rock to the right, and
low lean thorn between,

And thrice he heard a breech-bolt snick tho' never a man
was seen.

They have ridden the low moon out of the sky, their hoofs
drum up the dawn,

The dun he went like a wounded bull, but the mare like a
new-roused fawn.

The dun he fell at a water-course—in a woful heap fell he,
And Kamal has turned the red mare back, and pulled
the rider free.

He has knocked the pistol out of his hand—small room
was there to strive,

''Twas only by favour of mine,' quoth he, 'ye rode so long
alive :

There was not a rock for twenty mile, there was not a
clump of tree,

But covered a man of my own men with his rifle cocked
on his knee.

If I had raised my bridle-hand, as I have held it low,
The little jackals that flee so fast were feasting all in a
row :
If I had bowed my head on my breast, as I have held it
high,
The kite that whistles above us now were gorged till she
could not fly.’
Lightly answered the Colonel’s son : ‘Do good to bird
and beast,
But count who come for the broken meats before thou
makest a feast.
If there should follow a thousand swords to carry my
bones away,
Belike the price of a jackal’s meal were more than a thief
could pay.
They will feed their horse on the standing crop, their
men on the garnered grain,
The thatch of the byres will serve their fires when all the
cattle are slain.
But if thou thinkest the price be fair,—thy brethren wait
to sup,
The hound is kin to the jackal-spawn,—howl, dog, and
call them up !
And if thou thinkest the price be high, in steer and
gear and stack,
Give me my father’s mare again, and I’ll fight my own
way back !’
Kamal has gripped him by the hand and set him upon
his feet.
‘No talk shall be of dogs,’ said he, ‘when wolf and grey
wolf meet.
May I eat dirt if thou hast hurt of me in deed or breath ;
What dam of lances brought thee forth to jest at the
dawn with Death ?’

Lightly answered the Colonel's son : ' I hold by the blood
of my clan :

Take up the mare for my father's gift—by God, she has
carried a man ! '

The red mare ran to the Colonel's son, and nuzzled against
his breast ;

' We be two strong men,' said Kamal then, ' but she loveth
the younger best.

So she shall go with a lifter's dower, my turquoise studded
rein,

My broidered saddle and saddle-cloth, and silver stirrups
twain.'

The Colonel's son a pistol drew and held it muzzle-end,

' Ye have taken the one from a foe,' said he ; ' will ye take
the mate from a friend ? '

' A gift for a gift,' said Kamal straight ; ' a limb for the risk
of a limb.

Thy father has sent his son to me, I'll send my son to
him ! '

With that he whistled his only son, that dropped from a
mountain-crest—

He trod the ling like a buck in spring, and he looked
like a lance in rest.

' Now here is thy master,' Kamal said, ' who leads a troop
of the Guides,

And thou must ride at his left side as shield on shoulder
rides.

Till Death or I cut loose the tie, at camp and board
and bed,

Thy life is his—thy fate it is to guard him with thy head.

So, thou must eat the White Queen's meat, and all her foes
are thine,

And thou must harry thy father's hold for the peace of the
Border-line,

And thou must make a trooper tough and hack thy way to
power—

Belike they will raise thee to Ressaldar when I am hanged
in Peshawur.'

They have looked each other between the eyes, and there
they found no fault,

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on
leavened bread and salt :

They have taken the Oath of the Brother-in-Blood on fire
and fresh-cut sod,

On the hilt and the haft of the Khyber knife, and the
Wondrous Names of God.

The Colonel's son he rides the mare and Kamal's boy the
dun,

And two have come back to Fort Bukloh where there
went forth but one.

And when they drew to the Quarter-Guard, full twenty
swords flew clear--

There was not a man but carried his feud with the blood
of the mountaineer.

'Ha' done ! ha' done !' said the Colonel's son. 'Put up
the steel at your sides !

Last night ye had struck at a Border thief—to-night 'tis a
man of the Guides !'

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain
shall meet,*

*Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment
Seat ;*

*But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor
Birth,*

*When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come
from the ends of the earth !*

AC ETIAM.

I.

THE literature of our time presents many examples of writers who, in a professional sense, unite the *rôle* of the critic with that of the poet, and for the purposes of comparative criticism it may be necessary to differentiate between those who may be said to be critics first, and poets afterwards, and *vice versâ*. Without attempting this here, it will be convenient, in dealing with a number of writers who, for a variety of reasons (though in some cases fully entitled in point of merit) have not been included in the foregoing pages, to group such as have a natural affinity; and first among such groups we shall deal with those who are critics first and poets afterwards, either by priority of publication, quality of workmanship, or proportion of performance. That many great poets have been critics in a greater or less degree is of course true, some like Coleridge and Matthew Arnold attaining to almost equal eminence in both departments of literature. On the other hand, even greater poets may be named who, like Tennyson, have been content to remain relatively poets pure and simple. How much poetry has suffered by the divided *rôle* of the former, or how much criticism may have lost by the singleness of devotion of the latter, is a speculative inquiry scarcely profitable to follow even if time and space availed for its discussion. Except in very rare

cases man cannot live by poetry alone; and while this is so, journalism and criticism will continue to offer suitable means for necessary provision, though it cannot be but that poetry must suffer both from the divided interests involved, and from the condition of things which makes it possible for A to publish a volume of poems to-day, and to write half a dozen anonymous reviews of B's poems to appear in as many papers to-morrow. Of poet-critics a number have been dealt with in their proper places, and it only remains for us to treat of several who, as already stated, for various reasons may be more conveniently dealt with here.

JAMES ASHCROFT NOBLE, who has been long known as an able and conscientious critic, published in 1887 a small volume of poems under the modest title of "Verses of a Prose Writer." As might be expected from the title, the contents were simple, unaffected expressions of natural feeling, altogether free from ambition and exaggeration. Graceful fancy and sober reflectiveness rather than fiery imagination characterise Mr. Noble's verse, and his poems are rather the spontaneous outcome of the fragmentary leisure of a busy life than the result of set purpose and determined effort. "The Horizon" is one of these little snatches of song:—

THE HORIZON.

" Oh would, oh would that thou and I,
Now this brief day of love is past,
Could toward the sunset straightway fly
And fold our wearied wings at last
There, where the sea-line meets the sky.

" A sweet thing and a strange 'twould be
Thus, thus to break our prison bars,
And know that we at last were free
As voiceful waves and silent stars,—
There, where the sky-line meets the sea.

" But vain the longing ! thou and I,
As we have been must ever be,
Yet thither, wind, oh waft my sigh,
There, where the sky-line meets the sea,—
There, where the sea-line meets the sky."

Some of Mr. Noble's verses, notably those entitled "Poems of the Inner Life," show a deeper motive and a more earnest purpose. Of his more imaginative work "Without a Mask" and "The Broken Goblet" may be cited, while his lighter touch is illustrated by such poems as "In Fairyland." The writer's yearning after the beautiful, whether real or ideal, finds expression in "Our Dream":—

OUR DREAM.

"Perchance to men it may not be given
To know things real from things that seem ;
If, living on earth, we dream of heaven
Why, then, I hold it better to dream.

"Let us dream on 'mid the splendid shadows
That make existence a gladsome thing,
The dim deep woods and the flowery meadows
Where fairies frolic and skylarks sing ;

"Where bright shapes linger, and angel faces
Glow in the gleam of a visioned day,
And o'er the uplands on grassy spaces
Fond lovers wander, fair children play.

"Let us dream still, then, nor strive to sever
Things that are real from things that seem,
Let us slumber on for ever and ever
And know no waking from life's glad dream."

Of his successful manipulations of freer lyrical measures we may quote "An Invitation," an appeal which one would think could hardly fail of an immediate response :—

AN INVITATION.

"Come when Spring touches with gentle finger
The snows that linger
Among the hills ;
When to our homestead return the swallows,
And in the hollows
Bloom daffodils.

"Or, if thou tarry, come with the Summer,
That welcome comer,
Welcome as he ;
When noon-tide sunshine beats on the meadow,
A seat in shadow
We'll keep for thee.

"Or, if it please thee, come to the reaping,
When to safe keeping
They bring the sheaves ;
When Autumn decketh with coloured splendour
And pathos tender
The dying leaves.

"Or come and warm us when Winter freezes,
And northern breezes
Are keen and cold,
With loving glances, and close hand-pressings,
And fervent blessings
That grow not old.

"Nay! do not linger ; for each to-morrow
Will break in sorrow
If thou delay :
Come to us quickly ; our hearts are burning
With fervent yearning :
Come, come to-day."

Mr. Noble's essay on "The Sonnet in England," published with other essays (1893), may be regarded

as one of the most important contributions to sonnet literature, and his own sonnets have a charm and power which the following will evidence :—

I.

GEORGE ELIOT.

(CHRISTMAS EVE, 1880.)

- “Thy prayer is granted : thou hast joined the Choir
Invisible ; the Choir whose music makes
Life's discords grow to harmonies, and takes
Us unawares with sounds that are as fire
And light and melody in one. We tire
Of weary noon and night, of dawn that breaks
Only to bring again the cares, the aches,
The meannesses that drag us to the mire :
- “When lo ! amid life's din we catch thy clear
Large utterances from the lucid upper air,
Bidding us wipe away the miry stain,
And scale the stainless stars, and have no fear
Save the one dread of forfeiting our share
In the deep joy that follows noble pain.”

II.

BARREN DAYS.

- “What of these barren days which bring no flowers
To gladden with fair tints and odours sweet,—
No fruits that with their virgin bloom entreat
Violence from rose-red lips that in dim bowers
Pout with a thirsty longing ? Summer showers
Softly but vainly fall about my feet,
The air is languid with the summer heat
That warms in vain :—what of these barren hours ?
- “I know not : I can wait nor haste to know ;
The daily vision serves the daily need ;
It may be some revealing hour shall show
That while my sad sick heart did inly bleed
Because no blossom came nor fruit did grow
An angel hand had sowed celestial seed.”

Mr. Noble was born in Liverpool in the year 1844.

He has published "The Pelican Papers," "Morality in English Fiction," "The Sonnet in England, and other Essays," etc., etc., and has contributed to many of the critical journals of his time. Of his critical writing there are numerous examples in this work.

WALTER HERRIES POLLOCK, younger son of Sir W. F. Pollock, was born in London in the year 1850. He received his education at Eton and Trinity College, Cambridge, where he graduated in 1871, and was called to the Bar at the Inner Temple in 1874. He early turned his attention to literature, and delivered lectures with considerable success at the Royal Institution, London, and at various other places, on historical and literary themes. His published works comprise "Lectures on French Poets," a volume full of interesting criticism; "The Picture's Secret," a novel which somehow failed to make any conspicuous mark; "Songs and Rhymes, English and French"; "Verse of Two Tongues," and "The Poet and the Muse," a metrical translation, with an introduction from Alfred de Musset's "Nuits." After holding for some time the post of assistant-editor of the *Saturday Review*, Mr. Pollock in 1884 was entrusted with the sole editorial charge of that journal. The verse of Mr. Pollock is somewhat deficient in immediately arresting qualities. It has grace and fluency rather than strength, and we feel a lack of the impulse of strong passion or mastering imagination. No criticism, however, is more sterile than that which lays stress on mere negations and ignores positive charms, and that the latter are largely present in Mr. Pollock's poetical work will not be denied by any reader with quick feeling for the delicacies

of emotion and expression. There is no parade of scholarship, but the cultivated reticence, the precision of phrase, and the absence of all strain after the cheap effectiveness of eccentricity assure us that we are making acquaintance with the work of a scholar who holds fealty to the best traditions of literature, and who knows where to seek and how to study the models of supreme excellence. Horace and Heine, as well as Alfred de Musset, have probably influenced Mr. Pollock, and he has absorbed some of the Venusian's light graceful sentiment, some of the German's subtle irony. The poem entitled "Heinrich Heine" is a fine characterisation, with something of the master's manner.

"This was a singer, a poet bold,
Compact of Fire and Rainbow Gold :
Compact of Rainbow Gold and of Fire,
Of sorrow and sin and of heart's desire—
Of good and of evil and things unknown,
A merciless poet who cut to the bone.
He sounded the depths of our grief and our gladness,
He laughed at our mirth and he wept at our madness ;
He knew all the joy of the world, all the strife,
He knew, and he knew not, the meaning of life."

This is a good example of Mr. Pollock's work in his serious mood. His lighter touch is seen in "Father Francis."

" ' I come your sin-rid souls to shrive—
Is this the way wherein ye live ? '
We lightly think of virtue,
Enjoyment cannot hurt you.
' ' Ye love. Hear then of chivalry,
Of gallant truth and constancy.'
We find new loves the meekest,
And stolen kisses sweetest.

- “ ‘Voices ye have. Then should ye sing
In praise of heaven’s mighty king.’
We deem it is our duty
To chant our darlings’ beauty.
- “ ‘Strait are the gates of worldly pleasure;
The joy beyond no soul can measure.’
Alas! we are but mortal,
And much prefer the portal.
- “ ‘Nay, sons: then must I leave ye so;
But lost will be your souls, I trow.’
Nay, Father, make you merry;
Come, drawer, bring some sherry.
- “ ‘Me drink? Old birds are not unwary—
Still less—Ha—well—’tis fine canary.’
Mark how his old blood prances—
A stoup for Father Francis!
- “ ‘Your wine, my sons, is wondrous good,
And hath been long time in the wood.’
Mark how his old eye dances—
More wine for Father Francis!
- “ ‘A man, my sons—a man, I say,
Might well drink here till judgment day.’
Now for soft words and glances—
But where is Father Francis?
- “ ‘Heed me, my sons, I pray, no more;
I always sleep upon the floor.’
Alas! for old wine’s chances,
A shutter for Father Francis!”

HENRY BELLYSE BAILDON was born at Granton in 1849. At school, from whence he proceeded to Edinburgh University, he was a contemporary of Robert Louis Stevenson, with whom he worked upon a local magazine, contributing rival translations of the classics. His volumes of verse are “First Fruits and Shed Leaves” (1873); “Rosamund: a Tragic Drama” (1875); “Morning Clouds” (1877); and “The Spirit of Nature” (1880). Mr.

Baildon has also acted as honorary secretary of the Edinburgh Philosophical Institute, and of the University Extension Scheme in Edinburgh, in connection with which latter he has lectured on literature and modern poetry. Mr. Baildon's verse embraces many varieties of form, from the ballad to the ode and the drama. The Ballads are too long for reproduction here, and the Drama is not easily quotable within possible limits. "Calm at Ebb of Tide" may, however, serve as an illustration of Mr. Baildon's powers of observation and description of nature.

"Silent in the grey morning lies the sea,
Withdrawn from naked pier and desolate shore,
Where lie the wan pools in perplexity,
Lest the strong wave return to them no more.
Around the wet rock clings the clotted weed,
It hangs dank tresses from each blackened spar,
The grey-sailed ships that have forgot their speed
Against the mist-wall'd distance stand afar
And shoreward send their broken images,
For though no wave there is to shatter these,
Yet the long ripples slowly shoreward creep,
As though the sea breathed faint beneath her marbled
sleep."

The verses "To Fame," which preface the "Morning Clouds" volume, may also be quoted.

TO FAME.

"O haughty mistress, by a shadowed door,
I wait and listen for thy feet within;
I hear the tread of clowns upon thy floor,
Brattle of warriors, talkers' wordy din:
These dine with these, and pass, and come no more.
Not like to one of these would I come in.

"I stand without, as patient-proud as thou,
Who may'st not hear my knocking for the din ;—
And half I hope thou wilt not hear me now,
Or, hearing, wilt not pause to let me in ;
Still am I bound, as by a knightly vow,
Once having wooed, to perish or to win.

"Nay ; not as these would I to banquet come
To swagger it a season in thy hall,
Guest for a night at thy symposium,
To pass at cloaked Oblivion's silent call ;—
Nay, mistress, for my soul is mettlesome,
I come thy lover, if I come at all.

"So shalt thou hide me in a curtained place,
And whisper of my name in gentle wise,
Making clear twilight with thy shadowed face,—
A chastened splendour from thy reverent eyes ;
And thus, apart from clamour or disgrace,
Shall I abide in all men's memories.

"Thus would I have it, though I often doubt
It may not be. Though men have made thee Pope
To canonize or curse us, and thy shout
Hold for an oracle, thou dost but grope.
But I, I am content to be without,
For still I love the shadow and the hope.

"And sweet the alley here wherein I wait,
So dear that I forget whereto it goes,
And wander careless to thine outer gate,
And tread upon the deep-mossed graves of those
Who died without thy door disconsolate—
Perchance to share their reverent repose !

"Or, it may be, if thou relent at last,
And pity me upon thy doorway stones,
That, opening for me, thou shalt pause aghast
At my dead face, and make repentant moans,—
Bear me within thy mausoleum vast,
And make thy vain lament above my bones.'

H. T. MACKENZIE BELL, who is best known to the reading world by his sympathetic biography of Charles Whitehead, and by critical papers published in the literary journals and elsewhere, is also the author of several volumes of verse,—“The Keeping of the Vow” (1879), “Verses of Varied Life” (1882), and “Old Year Leaves” (1883). Mr. Mackenzie Bell was born in Liverpool on the 2nd of March, 1856. As a child, he was frail and delicate, and during manhood his literary and other activities have been painfully restricted by a paralytic affliction which has been endured, and its natural disabilities largely surmounted, by indomitable courage and cheerfulness. Notwithstanding physical infirmities, his literary career has been one of unflagging and strenuous industry. His critical prose has sympathy and discrimination; and if his verse lacks equality of excellence, it is at least simple and sincere.

Of his best work the following graceful sonnet, “Old Year Leaves,” is a good example:—

OLD YEAR LEAVES.

“Tossed by the storms of Autumn, chill and drear,
The leaves fall auburn-tinted, and the trees
Stand reft and bare, yet on the silent leas
The leaves lie drifted still—while cold, austere,
Stern Winter waits—while early snowdrops cheer
The woodland shadows—while the happy bees
Are wakened by the balmy western breeze,
And birds and boughs proclaim that Spring is here.

So lost hopes severed by the stress of life
Lie all unburied yet before our eyes,
Though none but we regard their mute decay;
And ever amid this stir and moil and strife
Fresh aims and growing purposes arise
Above the faded hopes of yesterday.”

HORACE G. GROSER was born in London in 1863. He has published "Atlantis and Other Poems" (1889), and made various contributions to periodical literature. Mr. Groser has a feeling for nature, and a love for the heroic in life. His command of the vehicle of expression is, however, in excess of the message he has to deliver. Hence he is more successful in his ballads of action than in his poems of "Sentiment and Reflection." "The Smiting of the Fleet," "The Holding of London-derry," and "The Fight of the Little *Content*," may just miss the distinction which belongs to the work of a great balladist like Macaulay, but they have a fine rhetoric warmed by a sympathetic imagination, and they stir us as we are only stirred by work of real vitality. Of Mr. Groser's more recent work, "Acro-Corinth, April 26th, 1888," is a pleasing example. It was published in the *Universal Review*.

"With broad bright belt of sands the Isthmus lay
Parting the blue swell of converging seas ;
The embattled mount, that once upon her knees
Cradled a mighty city, drew the day
In shining folds about her. Not with breath
Of boisterous winds and stir of orchard song
Came Summer here, but with a subtle, strong
Enchantment, a great silence that beneath
Was resonant of voices such as tease
The dull ears of a dreamer in his dreams.
No herd-boy's shout, no splash of woodland streams
Broke the wide calm, nor sway of whispering trees.

"Trampling through fragrant growths all day beset
With dusty bees in whose low utterance lives
The rapt soul of the South, that seldom strives
With hurrying Time, nor feels Life's fever-fret—

Down slender pathways stone-bestrewn, we came,
 Athirst, and by the rock-ledge far below
 Were pitched maidens grouped about the flow
 Of a clear fount whose many-remembered name
 Shone like the leap of its own limpid rill.

Swiftly with sunburnt hands all courteously
 They drew, nor yet had gleamed to sun and sky
 That brimming draught cold from the hollow hill.

"So the great world to-day with eager lips
 Stoops to the old springs, that from age to age
 Have gushed to cheer man's strenuous pilgrimage
 O'er the hill-paths where oft the footstep slips.
 There, where the noon glares and no shadows lie,
 And tired the will grows with the tiring feet,
 No new loud streams can yield a draught so sweet
 As welled for weary souls in years gone by.
 Still may we climb, still toil, attempt, achieve,
 But still for rest to these shall we return ;
 On unworn tracks for the old founts we yearn,
 And pitchers new the old cool wave receive."

ARTHUR SYMONS, who has contributed articles on Swinburne, Christina Rossetti, and others to this work, and whose writings are familiar to the readers of the *Academy* and other critical journals, was born February 28th, 1865. He published "Days and Nights" (1889) and "Silhouettes" (1892), from which works space prevents us from quoting as largely as we could wish. The former volume contains some bold dramatic studies and spirited ballads, of which "The Knife-Thrower" (perhaps the best), "Red Bredbury's End," and "A Café Singer" may be mentioned. Of the sonnets we may quote "The Opium-Smoker."

THE OPIUM-SMOKER.

"I am engulfed, and drown deliciously.
 Soft music like a perfume, and sweet light
 Golden with audible odours exquisite,
 Swathe me with cerements for eternity.

Time is no more. I pause and yet I flee.
 A million ages wrap me round with night.
 I drain a million ages of delight.
 I hold the future in my memory.
 Also I have this garret which I rent,
 This bed of straw, and this that was a chair,
 This worn-out body like a tattered tent,
 This crust, of which the rats have eaten part,
 This pipe of opium ; rage, remorse, despair ;
 This soul at pawn and this delirious heart."

The "Silhouettes," as their title indicates, are much slighter, and therefore much more quotable compositions. The following may speak for themselves:—

AFTER SUNSET.

"The sea lies quieted beneath
 The after-sunset flush
 That leaves upon the heaped grey clouds
 The grape's faint purple blush.
 "Pale, from a little space in heaven
 Of delicate ivory,
 The sickle-moon and one gold star
 Look down upon the sea."

IN BOHEMIA.

"Drawn blinds and flaring gas within,
 And wine, and women, and cigars ;
 Without, the city's heedless din ;
 Above, the white unheeding stars.
 "And we, alike from each remote,
 The world that works, the heaven that waits,
 Con our brief pleasures o'er by rote,
 The favourite pastime of the Fates.
 "We smoke, to fancy that we dream,
 And drink, a moment's joy to prove,
 And fain would love, and only seem
 To love because we cannot love.

"Draw back the blinds, put out the light :
'Tis morning, let the daylight come.
God ! how the women's cheeks are white,
And how the sunlight strikes us dumb ! "

AFTER LOVE.

"O to part now, and, parting now,
Never to meet again ;
To have done for ever, I and thou,
With joy, and so with pain.
"It is too hard, too hard to meet
As friends, and love no more ;
Those other meetings were too sweet
That went before.
"And I would have, now love is over,
An end to all, an end :
I cannot, having been your lover,
Stoop to become your friend ! "

TO A PORTRAIT.

"A pensive photograph
Watches me from the shelf—
Ghost of old love, and half
Ghost of myself !
"How the dear waiting eyes
Watch me and love me yet—
Sad home of memories,
Her waiting eyes !
"Ghost of old love, wronged ghost,
Return, though all the pain
Of all once loved, long lost,
Come back again.
"Forget not, but forgive !
Alas, too late I cry.
We are two ghosts that had their chance to live,
And lost it, she and I."

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS was born at Sandymount, Dublin, in the year 1866, but spent most of his childhood in Sligo. He has published "Fairy

and Folk Tales of the Irish Peasantry" (1888); "The Wanderings of Oisín" (1889); "Stories from Carleton" (1890); a volume of selections from the Irish novelists called "Irish Tales" (2 vols., 1891); "John Sherman and Dhoya" (Pseudonym Library, 1891); "The Countess Kathleen and Various Legends and Lyrics" (Cameo Series, 1892); and, in conjunction with Mr. E. J. Ellis, "The Works of William Blake" (3 vols., 1893). He has also contributed articles and short stories on Irish folklore subjects to the *National Observer*, and critical articles to that and other papers. Mr. Yeats is one of the group of young Irish men and women from whom we may hope much. His love for, and familiarity, not only with the legends of his native land, but with the hills and valleys that grow greener for their memory and the warm hearts that cherish them, qualify him to give true expression to Irish feeling and to revive not only the spirit of the national muse, but the natural atmosphere of its environment. Mr. Yeats's verse is of just the quality that we should expect from him: it is characteristically Irish both in its choice of theme and its manner of treatment. We find, on the one hand, the enshrinement of old legends in a simple, if not artless, form which is altogether free from the suspicion of newness; and, on the other, the celebration of the natural beauty of the greenest of the green isles of the sea as a background and framework for tender expressions of love-longing and natural pictures of rural felicity. The best thing that can be done for verse like his is to let it speak for itself. It needs no explanation, and calls for no analysis. It is art that needs criticism; and the nearer we approach to

Nature the further we recede from the critic's sphere. Mr. Yeats's poems are natural songs both in point of inspiration and diction, and the true standard of their criticism is the measure of their enjoyment. We regret that we have not space for more of them.

AN OLD SONG RE-SUNG.

"Down by the salley gardens my love and I did meet;
She passed the salley gardens with little snow-white feet.
She bid me take love easy as the leaves grow on the tree;
But I, being young and foolish, with her would not agree.

"In a field by the river my love and I did stand,
And on my leaning shoulder she laid her snow-white hand,
She bid me take life easy as the grass grows on the weirs;
But I was young and foolish and now am full of tears."

TO AN ISLE IN THE WATER.

"Shy one, shy one,
Shy one of my heart,
She moves in the firelight
Pensively apart.

"She carries in the dishes,
And lays them in a row.
To an isle in the water
With her would I go.

"She carries in the candles,
And lights the curtained room:
Shy in the doorway,
And shy in the gloom.

"And shy as a rabbit
Helpful and shy.
To an isle in the water
With her would I fly."

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE.

"I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made;
Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

- “ And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping
slow,
Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the
cricket sings;
There midnight’s all a glimmer and noon a purple glow,
An evening full of the linnet’s wings.
- “ I will arise and go now, for always night and day
I hear lake water lapping with low sounds on the shore;
While I stand on the roadway or on the pavements grey
I hear it in the deep heart’s core.”

FATHER GILLIGAN.

- “ The old priest Peter Gilligan
Was weary night and day
For half his flock were in their beds
Or under green sods lay.
- “ Once while he nodded on a chair
At the moth-hour of eve,
Another poor man sent for him
And he began to grieve.
- “ ‘ I have no rest, nor joy, nor peace,
For people die and die ;’
And after cried he, ‘ God forgive !
My body spake, not I !’
- “ And then, half-lying on the chair,
He knelt, prayed, fell asleep ;
And the moth-hour went from the fields,
And stars began to peep.
- “ They slowly into millions grew,
And leaves shook in the wind ;
And God covered the world with shade,
And whispered to mankind.
- “ Upon the time of sparrow chirp
When the moths came once more,
The old priest Peter Gilligan
Stood upright on the floor

- “ ‘Mavrone, mavrone ! the man has died
While I slept on the chair ;’
He roused his horse out of its sleep
And rode with little care.
- “ He rode now as he never rode,
By rocky lane and fen ;
The sick man’s wife opened the door,
‘ Father ! you come again ? ’
- “ ‘ And is the poor man dead ? ’ he cried.
‘ He died an hour ago.’
The old priest Peter Gilligan
In grief swayed to and fro.
- “ ‘ When you were gone he turned and died
As merry as a bird.’
The old priest Peter Gilligan
He knelt him at that word.
- “ ‘ He who hath made the night of stars,
For souls who tire and bleed
Sent one of His great angels down
To help me in my need.
- “ ‘ He who is wrapped in purple robes,
With planets in His care
Had pity on the least of things
Asleep upon a chair.’ ”

II.

Another group of writers which it is convenient to deal with here includes the song-writers and ballad-ists who have appealed with more or less success to a wide public upon popular lines—Clement Scott, Alfred Perceval Graves, George R. Sims, Frederic E. Weatherly, and Frederick Langbridge. The popularity of many ballads of this class is doubtless largely due to their suitability for recitation and to the frequent elocutionary rendering of them ; their humour and pathos being of that simple and obvious type which is attractive to audiences that

would probably be repelled, certainly unmoved, by the subtler, more allusive, and more reticent rendering which appeals to the literary connoisseur. Though writers like Mr. Sims and Mr. Langbridge choose the vehicle of verse rather than of prose, they may be numbered among the later literary disciples of Charles Dickens. In their treatment of the details of lowly life they aim at just the effects which Dickens best loved, and they achieve them by the means which Dickens constantly employed. The defect of this class of composition is the gratuitously unlovely realism with which it is wont to render the coarsenesses of vulgar utterance. This is, however, a fault from which much of their best work is entirely free; while some of it rises to a very high level of pure pathos. What the ballads owe to the reciter the songs owe to the singer; and while elocutionists may be said to have declaimed the ballads of Mr. Clement Scott and Mr. George R. Sims from almost every platform of the kingdom, vocalists, it may with equal truth be affirmed, have rendered the songs of Mr. Graves and Mr. Weatherly in almost every concert-hall and drawing-room in the land.

CLEMENT WILLIAM SCOTT was born in 1841, and though devoting himself mainly to journalism and the drama, has published besides several volumes of prose, "*Lays of a Londoner*" (1882), "*Poems for Recitation*" (1884), "*Lays and Lyrics*" (1888). Of his songs "*The Garden of Sleep*," set to music by Isidore de Lara, has been one of the most popular. Of his poems for recitation "*The Midnight Charge*" is one of the best.

ALFRED PERCEVAL GRAVES was born in Dublin in

the year 1846, and began his literary career in the *Dublin University Magazine* at seventeen years of age. He has published "Songs of Killarney" (1873), "Irish Songs and Ballads" (1882), besides a selection of fifty songs with music arranged by Dr. Villiers Stanford, and a selection entitled "Father O'Flynn, and Other Irish Lyrics." These volumes contain much characteristic Irish verse, of which "Father O'Flynn" and "O'Farrell the Fiddler" are good examples; the former set to an old Irish air by Dr. Villiers Stanford having enjoyed a wide popularity. The writer has, however, stronger claims to be ranked as a poet than are afforded by these contributions to Irish humour, as witness many a sweet and tender lyric.

GEORGE ROBERT SIMS (1847), dramatist and balladist, is one of the best known of London journalists. He has published several volumes of verse—"Ballads of Babylon" (1880), "Dagonet Ballads" (1881), "The Lifeboat and Other Poems" (1883), "Ballads and Poems" (1883), "The Land of Gold, and Other Poems" (1888), "Dagonet Ditties" (1891). Of these "The Lifeboat" has enjoyed a popularity as a recitation second to no piece of its time, unless it be "The Fireman's Wedding" of W. A. Eaton. Others of Mr. Sims' ballads, such as "Billy's Rose" and "The Road to Heaven," have also been very widely popular. Among his best pieces we should place "Keeping Christmas," which we should have quoted here had space permitted.

FREDERIC EDWARD WEATHERLY was born at Portishead in 1848, and was educated at Hereford Cathedral School and Brasenose College, Oxford. On leaving college he studied law, and was called

to the bar (1878). Few writers have written so large a number of songs which have become so widely popular as those of Mr. Weatherly, and few writers have been so much sought after by musical composers. He has also produced some delightful books for children, which have secured for him an enviable fame. He is, however, very much more than a writer of "words for music"; he is within his range a genuine poet; and if his aims are modest he is at any rate successful in realising them.

The Rev. FREDERICK LANGBRIDGE, Incumbent of St. John's Church, Limerick, was born in Birmingham on March 17th, 1849. He has published a number of volumes of original verse, of which perhaps the following are the more important, besides several volumes of selections for public reading or recitation—"Gushes and Grumbles" (1873), "Gaslight and Stars" (1880), "Songs in Sunshine" (1882), "Poor Folk's Lives, Ballads and Stories in Verse" (1887), "Sent Back by the Angels, and Other Ballads" (1888). Some of his original ballads must be placed among the very best of their class. "Exit Tommy" is a gem of rare purity and beauty.

The Rev. F. WILLIAM ORDE WARD (1843), Rector of Nuffield, who adopts the *nom de plume* F. HARALD WILLIAMS, may also be mentioned in this connection as one who appeals by popular means to a large public. He has published "Women must Weep" (1888), and "'Twixt Kiss and Lip; or, Under the Sword" (1890), a volume of over eight hundred large pages of closely printed verse. He has been called "The Laureate of the White Cross," and has written much in defence of morality in its broad sense, and on behalf of the poor and the oppressed.

Like most other facile writers he has written too much. Many of his pieces, however, are eminently popular in character, and their moral is unexceptional.

III.

A third group of poets whom it is convenient to deal with here, comprises those to whom it has been found impossible to give fuller representation in the body of the work. Some of these have never had recognition beyond a small circle of warm admirers; others may be said to have caught the eye of penetrating criticism, and found the audience fit, though few, which is the consolation prize of those who miss the laurel of popular applause. These include :—

ARTHUR JOSEPH MUNBY (1828), author of "Verses New and Old" (1865), "Dorothy" (1880), and several other volumes, is a writer whose healthy, hearty, breezy poems of country life bring with them a sense of refreshment as of the country itself, and awaken real interest in the loves and fates of heroes and heroines of rustic life. His fault is a want of taste, which sometimes mars, with vulgar details, pictures to which they are in no way necessary and with which they are not always consistent. That these blemishes are only occasional is of course true, and that they do not appear in the poet's best work is witnessed by such poems as "Doris," which may speak for itself.

DORIS.

A PASTORAL.

"I sat with Doris, the shepherd-maiden ;
Her crook was laden with wreathed flowers ;
I sat and woo'd her, through sunlight wheeling,
And shadows stealing, for hours and hours.

“And she, my Doris, whose lap encloses
Wild summer-roses of faint perfume,
The while I sued her, kept hush’d and harken’d,
Till shades had darken’d from gloss to gloom.

“She touch’d my shoulder with fearful finger ;
She said, ‘We linger, we must not stay :
My flock’s in danger, my sheep will wander ;
Behold them yonder, how far they stray !’

“I answer’d bolder, ‘Nay, let me hear you,
And still be near you, and still adore !
No wolf nor stranger will touch one yearling—
Ah ! stay, my darling, a moment more !’

“She whisper’d, sighing, ‘There will be sorrow
Beyond to-morrow, if I lose to-day ;
My fold unguarded, my flock unfolded—
I shall be scolded and sent away !’

“Said I, denying, ‘If they do miss you,
They ought to kiss you when you get home ;
And well rewarded by friend and neighbour
Should be the labour from which you come.’

“‘They might remember,’ she answer’d meekly,
‘That lambs are weakly, and sheep are wild ;
But if they love me, it’s none so fervent—
I am a servant, and not a child.’

“Then each hot ember glow’d quick within me,
And love did win me to swift reply :
‘Ah ! do but prove me, and none shall bind you,
Nor fray nor find you, until I die !’

“She blush’d and started, and stood awaiting,
As if debating in dreams divine :
But I did brave them—I told her plainly
She doubted vainly, she must be mine.

“So we, twin-hearted, from all the valley
Did rouse and rally her nibbling ewes,
And homeward drave them, we two together,
Through blooming heather and gleaming dews.

"That simple duty fresh grace did lend her,
My Doris tender, my Doris true;
That I, her warder, did always bless her,
And often press her to take her due :

"And now in beauty she fills my dwelling
With love excelling, and undefiled ;
And love doth guard her, both fast and fervent,
No more a servant, nor yet a child."

PHILIP STANHOPE WORSLEY (1831-1866), whose early death closed a career of exceptional beauty and promise, though known best by his admirable translations of the "Odyssey" (1861) and the "Iliad" (1865), published also "The Temple of Janus," a Newdigate prize poem in 1857, and a volume of "Poems and Translations" in 1863, of which a second and enlarged edition was issued posthumously in 1875. His original poems differ widely in merit, but those on classical subjects reach a very high level indeed. "Phaethon," the opening poem of the "Poems and Translations" volume, is an achievement, and but for its length would have been included in the body of this work, though it may be admitted that its length is in itself hardly sufficient excuse for its omission. It displays fine imagination, and a capacity for the large handling of a great theme. The Editor of this work hopes that a future edition of "The Poets and Poetry of the Century" may enable him to do greater justice to this poet's work. Philip Stanhope Worsley had a fine personality and an impressive presence, and a beauty of character which shone out with the light of transfiguration in a face of singularly expressive power, albeit worn by acute and long-continued physical

suffering. He was referred to in an obituary notice in the *Athenæum* as "the most perfect model of a Christian gentleman."

GEORGE FRANCIS (SAVAGE) ARMSTRONG was born in the year 1845. He has published "Poems" (1869); "Ugonê: a Tragedy" (1870); "The Tragedy of Israel (a trilogy): I. Saul" (1872), "II. David" (1874), "III. Solomon" (1876); "A Garland from Greece" (1882); "Stories of Wicklow" (1886); "Mephistopheles in Broadcloth" (1888); "One in the Infinite" (1891); and "Poems Lyrical and Dramatic," being a third edition of his first book with additions (1892). These volumes include many varieties of subject-matter and poetic form—lyrical, narrative, classical, legendary, satirical, philosophical, and dramatic. Some of his best work is to be found in "A Garland from Greece" and "Stories of Wicklow," which may be taken as his best representative volumes. Individual poems in these volumes are admirable, and passages in others leave little to be desired. Perhaps the best of the former are "The Brigand of Parnassus" and "The Chiote"; or, in another vein, "Time the Healer." Of the latter the best poems are "Luggatà," a version of the well-known Swan Legend, "The Wraith of De Reddlesford Castle," "The Glen of the Horse," and "The Fisherman." Mr. Armstrong has also published "Victoria regina et Imperatrix," a jubilee song from Ireland (1887); and an ode to the Tercenary of "Trinity College" (1892), a poem in which perhaps he reaches to his highest point of poetic attainment; as well as "The Life and Letters of Edmund J. Armstrong" (his brother), besides editing

two volumes respectively of his brother's essays and poems. Edmund John Armstrong (1841—1865), elder brother of the foregoing, was a writer whose early death probably prevented the fulfilment of considerable promise.

EDMUND G. A. HOLMES (1850)—author of "Poems," first series (1876), second series (1879)—is a fluent writer of thoughtful and melodious verse. His delineations of natural scenery are faithful and picturesque, as witness his lines "On the Yorkshire Coast." In another vein his poem "To my Mistress" shows command of rhythm, play of fancy, and felicity of expression. "Waiting for the Dawn" is a domestic picture framed in sorrow, and showing real pathos, as does also "Childhood's Home." "Standing Still," "For England's Sake," and the "Heavy Brigade" bespeak the poet's patriotism, which is not a vain-glorious excitement, but a dignified enthusiasm; while the "Sonnets of the Atlantic" exhibit the versatility of his skill in craftsmanship. It is, perhaps, as a landscape poet that he is the most successful.

THEOPHILUS JULIUS HENRY MARZIALS, who is of French extraction, was born in the year 1850. He first printed for private circulation in 1872, "The Passionate Dowsabella," a pastoral poem, reprinting it in 1873 in a volume entitled "A Gallery of Pigeons and Other Poems." Since the publication of this volume Mr. Marzials has devoted himself to musical composition, and has written many popular songs. Perhaps nothing better has been written upon the subject of Mr. Marzials' poetic

work than the review by Mr. G. A. Simcox in the *Academy* (May 15th, 1873) on the appearance of his volume "The Gallery of Pigeons." As Mr. Simcox points out the interest in the poet's work "lies apart from most of the ordinary interests of poetry; it does not depend upon thought or passion, still less upon character or incident; it does not depend even upon the attraction of some contagious mood: it depends simply and solely on the endless combinations of wonderfully vivid perceptions and the picturesque inventions of a joyous fancy." Writing, thus exuberantly fanciful, is apt to become more bewildering than beautiful, more dazzling than delightful. To quote Mr. Simcox again, "It is easier to be sure that the book is brilliant—and it is in some ways very brilliant indeed—than that it is enjoyable, and yet it contains as clear evidence as a book can contain, that its composition was a source of keen and legitimate enjoyment." The fact is the decoration is everywhere too florid for the framework, the fabric especially of the longer poems is too slight to sustain the weight and impulse of the torrent of fancy that riots over it. As Mr. Simcox says, "the rush of fresh, sparkling fancies is too rapid, too sustained, too abundant, not to be spontaneous, only to us who have not the fountain within us there may come a sense that a brook, whose course we can trace, though it is neither very bright, nor very deep, nor very swift, is more refreshing than volumes of spray that are only thrown up to fall down again, though it may shine, as Mr. Marzials' verse does shine, with more colours than the rainbow." And yet while this is true of the poems as a whole, it is also true that there

are many exquisite and tender verses scattered through the volume which one would be sorry to lose. Of Mr. Marzials' successes in music this is not the place to speak. To quote Mr. Stedman's "Victorian Poets," "The later songs of Marzials, who is both composer and balladist, are far more enjoyable than his early rococo-verse," and "a poet is to be envied who can hear, wherever he goes, his own words and music."

REV. HENRY CHARLES BEECHING, Rector of Yattendon, Berks—joint author with Mr. J. W. Mackail and Mr. J. B. B. Nichols of two volumes of verse, "Love in Idleness" (1883) and "Love's Looking-Glass" (1891),—has also edited a number of Shakespeare's plays, and written upon the subject of Prosody. Space avails for but one short poem, which is given with regret that opportunity does not serve for larger representation.

PRAYERS.

I.

"God who created me
Nimble and light of limb,
In three elements free,
To run, to ride, to swim :
Not when the sense is dim,
But now from the heart of joy,
I would remember Him :
Take the thanks of a boy.

II.

"Jesus, King and Lord,
Whose are my foes to fight,
Gird me with Thy sword
Swift and sharp and bright.

Thee would I serve if I might ;
And conquer if I can,
From day-dawn till night,
Take the strength of a man.

III.

“Spirit of Love and Truth,
Breathing in grosser clay,
The light and flame of youth,
Delight of men in the fray,
Wisdom in strength’s decay ;
From pain, strife, wrong to be free
This best gift I pray
Take my spirit to Thee.”

ALBERT EUBULE-EVANS is probably much more widely known as a writer of fiction than as a poet, though his verse entitles him to recognition in what, perhaps, we may call the inner literary circle. His poem “The Curse of Immortality” (1873) is a fine and original treatment of the legend of the Wandering Jew, and contains many passages of great beauty and power. An analysis of this poem is beyond the scope of our present opportunity ; nor, indeed, is one needed after the fine treatment of it at the hands of Professor Moulton in *Poet-Lore*, June and July, 1891. Of “Through Dark to Light,” of which the first edition was published anonymously, and a new edition in 1886, Professor Moulton says : “I know of nothing in poetry of equal rank that reconciles so much advanced thought with such accepted views of Christianity” ; and this remark, taken together with the title of the work, will be a sufficient indication of its scope and aim. “The Christ Picture” is a noble poem.

LADY CHARLOTTE ELLIOT published “Medusa and Other Poems” in 1878. It is a volume of only

153 pp.; but it contains verse of high quality in some variety. The poems "Medusa" and "The Son of Metaneira" show unmistakable power in the handling of classical themes and in the command of musical measures. Both poems evidence subtlety of imagination and elevation of feeling delicately expressed in sustained and resonant verse. "Rosebud and Ragweed," a pathetic story, contrasting the conditions of life of a child of wealth and one of poverty, shows the poet's power of easy versification in a different form. "Darkness after Dawn," a London reverie, is an example in a different vein, and shows occasionally, like some others of the poet's verses, more vigour in thought than in expression. One is reminded in this connection of the lines in Lefroy's sonnet "Art that Endures" (p. 487) :—

"Match well thy metres with a strong design.
Let noble themes find nervous utterance. Flee
The frail conceit, *the weak mellifluous line.*"

DR. JOHN ARTHUR GOODCHILD, the author of "Somnia Medici," first, second, and third series, deserves more than passing mention. "The Organ-Builder: a Song of Degrees" is a parable poem of much beauty and power; "The Birkenhead: a Tale for Englishmen," a ballad which echoes somewhat of the greatness of the heroism it celebrates. "During Her Majesty's Pleasure" is a powerful dramatic study. Of poems in a more colloquial form "A Delicate Point, by the Autocrat of the Business Train," is a good example. Dr. Goodchild's work shows at once boldness in design, skill in invention, and subtlety in thought. Parable is, perhaps,

his *forte*, and the "Parable of the Spirit" and the "Parable of the Flesh" are among the best.

F. WYVILLE HOME, who is a descendant of the family that included John Home, the author of "Douglas," was born at Edinburgh on the 23rd of March, 1851. His volumes of verse are "Songs of a Wayfarer" (1878), "Lay Canticles and Other Poems" (1883), and "The Wrath of the Fay" (1887). Mr. Home had the good fortune to catch the ear of the critics on his first utterance, and his earliest volume was received with expressions of commendation such as seldom greet the appearance of an initial volume. Unfortunately, for the purposes of selection, Mr. Home's best work is to be found in his longer poems. "Salvestra and Girolamo," a story from Boccaccio, the principal story in his first volume, is one of these. Original in form, the stanza adopted being new, the interest is well sustained, and the story is told with delicacy and beauty. "On the Hither Side of Death" is another of his longer poems, which also contains some of his best work. "The Fay," a fairy poem which the *Athenæum* declared upon its appearance to be worthy to rank with the similar efforts of Drayton, Herrick, and Ben Jonson, we should have been glad to have quoted here had space permitted. Mr. Home has written a number of sonnets, of which the following, entitled "Dover Cliff," may serve as an example:—

"Last April, when the winds had lost their chill,
I lay down dreamily upon the verge
Of Shakespeare's Cliff, where sea and sea-wind scourge
The eternal barrier that withstands them still.

I heard the billows break beneath and fill
The wide air with the thunder of the surge ;
And near my cheek, half fearful to emerge,
A violet grew upon the grassy hill.

There while I lay, Poet, I dreamed of thee.
Thy very voice, whose matchless music yet
O'ermasters all the world's, surrounded me,
Singing, and in the sound of it there met
With all the might and passion of the sea
The utter sweetness of the violet."

Of other lyric measures adopted by Mr. Home,
and they are many, we may quote the following,
entitled "The Dew-fall":—

"I heard the word of the Dew-fall
As it gathered itself to a pearl,
And lay on the leaf of a Lily
Like a tear on the cheek of a girl.
'Cold, cold, O Lily,'
The Dewdrop said to the leaf ;—
'Thy leaf, O Lily, is cold and chilly
And pale as a wordless grief.'

"There arose a breeze at the nightfall,
And blew the rushes apart ;
The Lily shook, and the Dewdrop
Slipt inward, and lay at her heart.
'Cold, cold, O Lily,'
Said the Dewdrop unto the flower ;—
'Thy heart, O Lily, is cold and chilly
And dark as a wintry shower.'

"And the night went by with its starlight,
And the sun came up in his might ;
And the Dewdrop arose from the Lily,
And melted to mist in his light.
'Cold, cold, was the Lily,'
Said the dew with a sigh of desire ;
'At the daylight's close I will sleep with the Rose,
For the Rose has a heart of fire.'"

Artistic difficulties do not seem to daunt Mr. Home, and he displays no little skill in expressing himself in each and every form he tries. There are some rondeaus in his volumes, of which the one entitled "At Schubert's Grave" may be cited :—

"We had good hope to pleasure thee, though dead,
Though still thy child's-heart, low thy poet's-head,
O Schubert, when, remembering thy last cry
'Beethoven is not here!' we laid thee by
Thy well-belov'd, worshipped brother's bed.

"At least to comfort our own hearts that bled,
With knowledge that the same tree's leaves were shed,
Each year on those two graves, they sleep so nigh,
We had good hope.

"Yea, but to look past death without one dread,
To see thee such that in thee there is bred
Pleasure or pain in aught that we deny
Or grant to thy poor dust for place to lie—
I know not how we said it, if we said
We had good hope."

DOUGLAS BROOK WHEELTON SLADEN was born in London in the year 1856. Educated at Cheltenham and Oxford, he proceeded to Australia in 1879, and was appointed Professor of History at the University of Sydney. He has since travelled and resided upon the Continent of Europe, and in the United States, and also visited Japan, contributing descriptions of his travels to various journals, as well as publishing several books. In verse he has published "Frithjof and Ingebjorg" (1882); "A Poetry of Exiles" (1883); "A Summer Christmas" (1884); "In Cornwall and Across the

Sea" (1885); "Edward the Black Prince: an Epic Drama" (1886); "The Spanish Armada" (1888); besides "Australian Lyrics," first and second editions, and several anthologies. Mr. Sladen has followed various forms of verse—the lyric, the ballad, the epic, and the drama. Perhaps his most successful work is to be found in his ballads and lyrics. "The Squire's Brother" is a good example of the former, and "Under the Wattle" a fair specimen of the latter.

UNDER THE WATTLE.

" ' Why should not Wattle do
For Mistletoe ? '
Asked one—they were but two—
Where wattles grow.

" He was her lover, too,
Who urged her so—
' Why should not Wattle do
For Mistletoe ? '

" A rose-cheek rosier grew ;
Rose-lips breathed low—
' Since it is here—and You—
I hardly know
Why Wattle should not do. ' "

ROBERT OFFLEY ASHBURTON MILNES (1858), the second Baron Houghton who in some measure has followed politics and poetry, published a volume of "Stray Verses, 1889 and 1890," in the year 1891, a second edition of which appeared in 1892. This volume contains a number of lyrics that we should have been glad to quote had space permitted, among which "Down the Stream," "The

Bird," and "In Autumn," may be mentioned. "Lord Houghton's poetic gift," says the *Athenæum* in reviewing this volume, "is for that light and delicate lyricism in which thought and feeling are suggested, rather than expressed, and in which any straining there may be is concealed by gracefulness." An easy command of the vehicle of verse associated with a reserve which is content to suggest rather than elaborate, is capable of a great deal, and we shall hope to see more of such lyrics as those we have already named.

CHARLES GEORGE DOUGLAS ROBERTS, whose first volume of verse, "Orion and Other Poems" (1880), was greeted by the *Epoch* of New York as "the first volume of notable English-Canadian song," was born at Douglas, near Fredericton, New Brunswick, on January 10th, 1860. He was educated at home and at the University of New Brunswick, and became for some months the Editor of Professor Goldwin Smith's paper *The Week* of Toronto, afterwards accepting the professorship of Modern Literature in King's College, Windsor, Nova Scotia. In 1887, he published a second volume of verse entitled "In Divers Tones," besides which he has contributed both prose and verse to the periodical press. His poetry shows alike the patriot's love for the land of his birth, and the scholar's love for the source of classic inspiration. His "Canada" and his "Ode to the Canadian Confederacy," are fine appeals to the national spirit, while his "Orion," "Off Pelorus," and "The Pipes of Pan," are happy examples of his love for and power over classical themes. The former may well

be allowed to represent both the poet and the dominion, neither of which can be adequately dealt with within the limits of remaining space :—

CANADA.

“O Child of Nations, giant-limbed,
Who stand'st among the nations now
Unheeded, unadored, unhymned,
With unanointed brow,—

“How long the ignoble sloth, how long
The trust in greatness not thine own?
Surely the lion's brood is strong
To front the world alone!

“How long the indolence, ere thou dare
Achieve thy destiny, seize thy fame—
Ere our proud eyes behold thee bear
A nation's franchise, nation's name?

“The Saxon force, the Celtic fire,
These are thy manhood's heritage!
Why rest with babes and slaves? Seek higher
The place of race and age.

“I see to every wind unfurled
The flag that bears the Maple-Wreath;
Thy swift keels furrow round the world
Its blood-red folds beneath;

“Thy swift keels cleave the furthest seas;
Thy white sails swell with alien gales;
To stream on each remotest breeze
The black smoke of thy pipes exhales.

“O Falterer, let thy past convince
Thy future,—all the growth, the gain,
The fame since Cartier knew thee, since
Thy shores beheld Champlain!

“Montcalm and Wolfe! Wolfe and Montcalm!
 Quebec, thy storied citadel
 Attest in burning song and psalm
 How here thy heroes fell!

“O Thou that bor’st the battle’s brunt
 At Queenston, and at Lundy’s Lane,—
 On whose scant ranks but iron front
 The battle broke in vain!—

“Whose was the danger, whose the day,
 From whose triumphant throats the cheers,
 At Chrysler’s Farm, at Chateauguay,
 Storming like clarion-bursts our ears?

“On soft Pacific slopes,—beside
 Strange floods that northward rave and fall,—
 Where chafes Acadia’s chainless tide—
 Thy sons await thy call.

“They wait; but some in exile, some
 With strangers housed, in stranger lands;—
 And some Canadian lips are dumb
 Beneath Egyptian sands.

“O mystic Nile! Thy secret yields
 Before us; thy most ancient dreams
 Are mixed with far Canadian fields
 And murmur of Canadian streams.

“But thou, my Country, dream not thou!
 Wake, and behold how night is done,—
 How on thy breast, and o’er thy brow,
 Bursts the uprising sun!”

Of the poems on classical subjects “*Off Pelorus*” may serve as an example, illustrating as it does also the poet’s love of colour and his powers of natural description :—

OFF PELORUS.

“Crimson swims the sunset over far Pelorus;
 Burning crimson tops its frowning crest of pine.
 Purple sleeps the shore and floats the wave before us,
 Eachwhere from the oar-stroke eddying warm like wine.

- "Soundless foams the creamy violet wake behind us ;
We but *see* the creaking of the labored oar ;
We have stopped our ears,—mad were we not to blind us,
Lest our eyes behold our Ithaca no more.
- "See the purple splendor o'er the island streaming,
O'er the prostrate sails and equal-sided ship !
Windless hangs the vine, and warm the sands lie gleaming ;
Droop the great grape-clusters melting for the lip.
- "Sweet the golden calm, the glowing light elysian.
Sweet were red-mouthed plenty mindless grown of pain.
Sweeter yet behold—a sore-bewildering vision !
Idly took we thought, and stopped our ears in vain.
- "Idly took we thought, for still our eyes betray us.
Lo, the white-limbed maids, with love-soft eyes aglow,
Gleaming bosoms bare, loosed hair, sweet hands to slay us,
Warm lips wild with song, and softer throats than snow !
- "See the King ! he hearkens,—hears their song,—strains forward,—
As some mountain snake attends the shepherd's reed,
Now with urgent hand he bids us turn us shoreward,—
Bend the groaning oar now ; give the king no heed !
- "Mark the luring music by his eyes' wild yearning,
Eager lips, and mighty straining at the cords !
Well we guess the song, the subtle words and burning,
Sung to him, the subtle king of burning words.
- "' Much-enduring Wanderer, wondrous-tongued, come nigher !
Sage of princes, bane of Ilion's lofty walls !
Whatsoe'er in all the populous earth befalls
We will teach thee, to thine uttermost desire.'
- "So, we rise up twain, and make his bonds securer.
Seethes the startled sea now from the surging blade.
Leaps the dark ship forth, as we, with hearts grown surer,
Eyes averse, and war-worn faces made afraid,
- "O'er the waste warm reaches drive our prow, sea-cleaving,
Past the luring death, into the folding night.
Home shall hold us yet, and cease our wives from grieving,—
Safe from storm, and toil, and flame, and clanging fight."

The same volume, "In Divers Tones," contains several love lyrics, one of which at least has been singled out for high praise :—

IN NOTRE DAME.

"When first did I perceive you, when take heed
Of what is now so deep in heart and brain
That tears shall not efface it, nor the greed
Of time or fate destroy, nor scorn, nor pain?

"Long summers back I trembled to the vision
Of your keen beauty,—a delirious sense
That he you loved might hold in like derision
Or Hell or Heaven, or sin or innocence.

"This in my heart of hearts, while outwardly
Nor speech nor guarded glance my dream betrayed ;
Till one day, so past thought you maddened me,
My dream escaped my lips, glad and afraid.

"Afraid, where no fear was. For lo, the gift
(Worlds could not purchase it) was mine, was mine !
And oh, my Sweet, how swift we went adrift
On wild sweet waters, warmer-hued than wine !

"My very eyes are dizzy with delight
At your recalled caresses. Peace, my heart !
She whom you beat so wild for lies to-night
From you too many bitter leagues apart.

"Be calm, and I will talk to you of her ;
And you shall listen, passionately still ;
And as the pauses in my verse recur,
Think, heart, all this does fealty to your will !

"All this,—a lithe and perfect-moulded form,
Instinct with subtle gesture, soft, intense.
Head small and queenlike, dainty feet that warm
Even the dull world's ways into rapturous sense.

“Clear, broad, white forehead, crowned low down with hair
Darker than night, more soft than sleep or tears.
Nose neither small nor great, but straight, and fair.
Like naught but smooth sea-shells her delicate ears.

“But how to tell about her mouth and eyes !
Her strange, sweet, maddening eyes, her subtle mouth !
Mouth in whose closure all love’s sweetness lives,—
Eyes with the warm gleam of the lustrous south !

“Fathomless dusk by night, the day lets in
Glimmer of emerald,—thus those eyes of hers !
Above the firm sweep of the moulded chin
The lips, than whose least kiss Heaven’s gifts were worse.

“Her bosom,—ah that now my head were laid
Warm in that resting-place ! But, heart, be still !
I will refrain, and break my dreams, afraid
To stir the yearning I can not fulfil.

“Love, in the northern night of Brittany
Hear you no voice divide the night like flame ?
In these gray walls the inmost soul of me
Is swooning with the music of your name.”

JAMES DRYDEN HOSKEN, the author of “Phaon and Sappho, a play with selection of poems” (Penzance, 1891), “Phaon and Sappho, and Nimrod” (London, 1892), was born at Helston in Cornwall. Practically self-educated, he came to London, and became an outdoor officer in the Customs, afterwards changing his vocation for that of a rural postman, and becoming in time a night-sorter in the General Post Office. Health failing he returned to his native place, where he found partial employment as an auxiliary postman. For one under such circumstances to produce classical dramas in Shakespearian form, with the measure of success which these plays attain, is surely

phenomenal. That they are marred by anachronisms and solecisms the author himself is aware ; but with all their defects, they remain remarkable works, and have real merit apart from the consideration of the circumstances of their production. Mr. E. D. A. Morshead, in reviewing these plays in the *Academy*, says they are "full of action," "the verse is forcible and often melodious, and the plots are interesting"; and remarking that the principal defect lies in the drawing of the characters, points out that it is in "pure reflection" that the poet "reaches his best level." In this judgment most critics will concur, and all will agree with the critic's conclusion that "it is impossible to read these plays without admiration for the mind which, under such stress of circumstances, could produce such work."

HENRY JOHN, the third son of MR. COVENTRY PATMORE, should be mentioned among those who, in their time, inspired high hopes which time was not given them to fulfil. He was born on the 8th of May, 1860, apparently inheriting a delicate constitution from his mother, who died of consumption two years after his birth. Always physically delicate, he showed unusual mental activity, and easily distinguished himself at school, matriculating with honours at the London University in 1877. A disease which attacked one of his eyes and ultimately destroyed its sight prevented a continuation of his studies. A serious illness in 1881 further weakened him, and though he recovered sufficiently to become articled to the law it soon became evident that his recovery was but temporary, and on February the 24th, 1883, he died. Early in the afternoon of the

day on which he died, his father proposed that some of his poems should be published, to which he replied: "I should like it very much." After his death therefore a volume was issued from the press of the Rev. Henry Daniel of Oxford, from which space does not avail for quotation. It may be said, however, to have been a volume of marked promise, for although there was much to recall the manner of the writer's father, there was also a marked originality of thought, and sometimes a terse finish of expression not unworthy of Landor.

IV.

YET another group, some of whom are entitled to larger representation than can possibly be given in this edition, includes such well-known women writers as the late Amy Levy, author of "*Xantippe and Other Verses*" (1881), "*A Minor Poet and Other Verses*" (1884), "*A London Plane-Tree and Other Verses*" (1889), and several works of fiction, of which "*Reuben Sachs*" (1888) is the most important; Miss Sarson C. J. Ingram, author of "*Selina's Story*" (1875), and "*Caedmon's Vision*" (1882); Miss Elizabeth Rachel Chapman, author of "*The New Purgatory and Other Poems*" (1887); Miss Katharine Tynan, author of "*Louise de la Vallière and Other Poems*" (1885), "*Shamrocks*" (1887), "*Ballads and Lyrics*" (1891), and other works; Miss May Probyn, author of "*Poems*" (1881), "*A Ballad of the Road and Other Poems*" (1883), "*Once, Twice, Thrice, and Away*," a novel (1878), and other works of fiction; Miss Jane Barlow, author of "*Bog-Land Studies*" (verse) (1891), and "*Irish Idylls*" (prose) (1892); and Mrs.

Frances Wynne, author of "Whisper!" (poems) (1890). With regard to some of these, articles have been written, and selections put into type, but the proper limits of this volume have already been far exceeded, and the Editor is compelled, with many regrets and apologies, to omit much that he had hoped to include, and to hold over all that is crowded out for a larger opportunity.

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